

CHANDAMAMA

JANUARY 1992

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See my tail
It's out of a
Fairy Tale



Nice 'n' funny
I'm a Bunny



Foxy is my name
But I'm ob-so tame



Your Bear Hugs
are warmer
than mine

Tonight



Little one a cuddles?



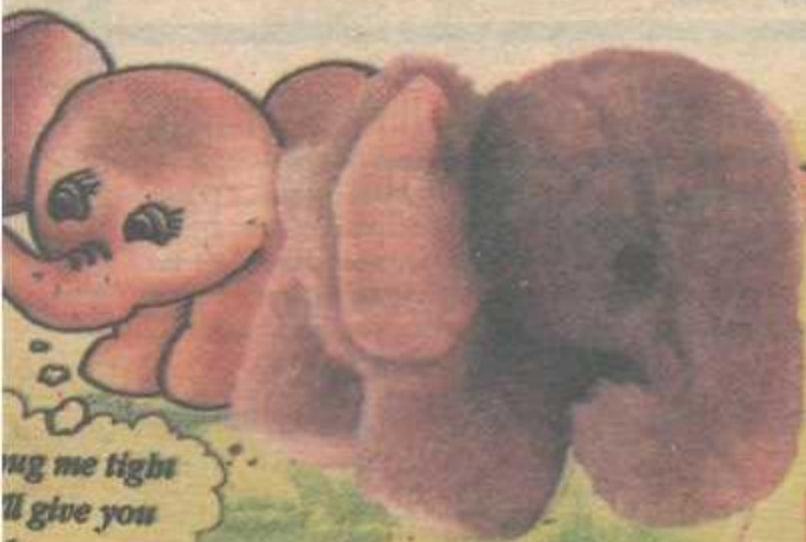
Give the
Lil' Panda
a Handa



I can't chase
no mice
But I'm
soft 'n' nice



No carrots to eat
But I'm a treat



hug me tight
I'll give you
a

CUDDLES

CHANDAMAMA TOYTRONIX



CHANDAMAMA

IN THIS ISSUE

Vol. 22 JANUARY 1992 No. 7

Stories :

The Clever Bandit	... Page 10
Adventures Of Apurva-11	... Page 19
The Magic Tambourine	... Page 25
Curse And Compliment	... Page 37
Muthayya And His Master	... Page 44
A Royal Lesson.	... Page 50
Veer Hanuman-16	... Page 55

Picture Stories :

Panchatantra-13	... Page 14
The Beauty of Foundation-stones	... Page 49

Features :

Nehru Award for Kohl	... Page 8
Supplement-39	... Page 33
World Of Sport	... Page 43
World Of Nature	... Page 54

**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 22 FEBRUARY 1992 No. 8

HARBINGER OF GOOD NEWS: The Vanaras are anxious to know from Hanuman how he has managed to meet Sitadevi. He gives them all details of his journey to Lanka, and meetings with Sita and Ravana. They are happy that one among them could achieve the mission entrusted to them. On their way to Kishkindhya, they alight on a beautiful garden and indulge in revelry. At Kishkindhya Sugriva is sure that the Vanaras have brought good news and eagerly awaits their return. **VEER HANUMAN** narrates the Vanara leader's meeting with Rama, to whom he gives Sita's message.

GRANITE PORRIDGE: What's that? asks the villager, of Velan who is in search of food but does not want to beg for it. He uses his wits to prepare a porridge with the help of two stones and the gullible villager and his family. How he succeeds is the "lighter side" of the story.

PLUS the serial **ADVENTURES OF APURVA**, and the old-time favourite **PANCHATANTRA**, besides **CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT** with a new series.

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Controlling Editor:
NAGI REDDI



Founder:
CHAKRAPANI

NEW WORLD ORDER

Another New Year. An appropriate time to consider the possibilities of a New World Order, which people have been referring to in recent months.

It was first mentioned by President George Bush of the U.S.A. soon after the American success in the Gulf War. We can more or less surmise that what he had in mind was some major changes in the world's political set-up.

On looking back, we do come across significant changes in the past one year: the break-up of monolithic federations, like the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia; the emergence of small nations wishing for freedom and sovereign status; the decision of superpowers to effect cuts in their arms strength; and the possibility of peace returning to strife-torn regions in south-east Asia and West Asia—all changes which give hope of a new world order.

But do we stop there? Listen to the Chinese Premier Li Peng, who defines a new international order taking the shape of "international affairs being handled with the participation of all nations, so that peace and security of the world can be ensured." He goes a step further and says, the five principles of peaceful co-existence (*Panch Sheel*, as enunciated by Pandit Nehru, President Nasser, and Marshal Tito as the foundation of the non-aligned movement) should be the basis of the new order.

It has now been left to a former Indian diplomat, Dr. Indu Prakash Singh, to provide a clearer definition of a new social order. He calls it Cooperative Commonwealth, a combination of the "politics of Abraham Lincoln, the economics of Lenin, and the moral philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi", in which lies the salvation of mankind. Some food for thought.

"CHANDAMAMA" wishes its readers a Happy New Year.

India, which suffered a partition as a price for Independence 44 years ago, has honoured someone who strived for and succeeded in unifying two countries that were separated 46 years ago as a result of war. The countries were West Germany and East Germany. The German Chancellor, Dr. Helmut Kohl, who is the main architect of the peaceful and democratic unification of Germany, was recently chosen for the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for the year 1990.

The Award was announced on the eve of Nehru Jayanti (November 14) and the conferment of the same award for 1989 on the President of Zimbabwe, Mr. Robert Mugabe, for playing a very prominent role in solving racial discrimination as was being practised in South Africa

till very recently.

Germany was one during the reign of the last emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and later during the dictatorship of the Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler. Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 triggered off the Second World War (1939-45).

When Germany's defeat became certain, Hitler committed suicide. Following its surrender, Germany was divided into four zones under the occupationary forces of the U.S.A., Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. The eastern zone became an independent state in 1949 as the

German Democratic Republic or East Germany. The same year, the Federal Republic of Germany or West Germany, too, was established, though it got full sovereignty only in 1954. East Berlin and Bonn were the respective capitals.

A WINDOW ON THE WORLD

NEHRU AWARD FOR KOHL

After the East Berlin riots of 1953, suppressed by the Soviet troops, was erected what came to be known as the Berlin Wall, to divide the capital from West Berlin with a view to preventing the inhabitants of East Berlin from escaping to the rival political system of West Berlin.

In 1973, the two Germanys established normal relations. In 1976, Erich Honecker, a communist politician, became the head of state in East Germany. While remain-

ing an ally of the Soviet Union, he advocated friendship between the two Germanys and paid his first visit to West Germany in 1987 when Dr. Helmut Kohl was the Chancellor there.

The 12-nation European Council, holding its summit in April 1990, gave the go-ahead to Dr. Kohl for the peaceful integra-

tion of the Germanys. From then, Dr. Kohl strode the European scene like a Colossus. On October 3, 1990, the two Germanys became one nation. This was augured by the dismantling of the Berlin Wall a year earlier. With a population of nearly 80 million and a combined

economy, united Germany has the potential of becoming a formidable power in the world.

In the elections held in December 1990, Dr. Kohl was elected Chancellor. In an

interview, Dr. Kohl once said, he had been inspired by the vision of Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru "who had conceptualised a world order free of conflict and

power blocs". The Nehru Award jury characterised the reunification of Germany as marking the advent of a new era in the history of Europe.





THE CLEVER BANDIT

Once upon a time, a sanyasi built an ashram for himself on the way to a forest. Nobody knew from where he had come, or when. Suddenly, one fine morning, people who went that way saw the hut and the sanyasi seated beneath a tree in front.

He was tall and well built. His forehead was smeared with holy ash, with a vermillion mark in the centre. This made his face aglow. His dark flowing beard added to his handsomeness.

People believed that he possessed some miraculous powers. There were occasions when he hinted that they were not far from wrong; no wonder they flocked to him to watch his miracles and pay their respects. Soon he was drawing a lot of people every day and the way to the forest was no longer desolate.

The crowds attracted thefts and robberies much to the annoyance of the people. So they would visit the ashram during the day and invariably left the place before it got dark, lest they were troubled by robbers on the way.

Some people took complaints of robbery to the sanyasi who, however, assured them that they could go to him without any fear and he would take care of the robbers. The next few days, people could go that way without any molestation. They now had more faith and confidence in the sanyasi.

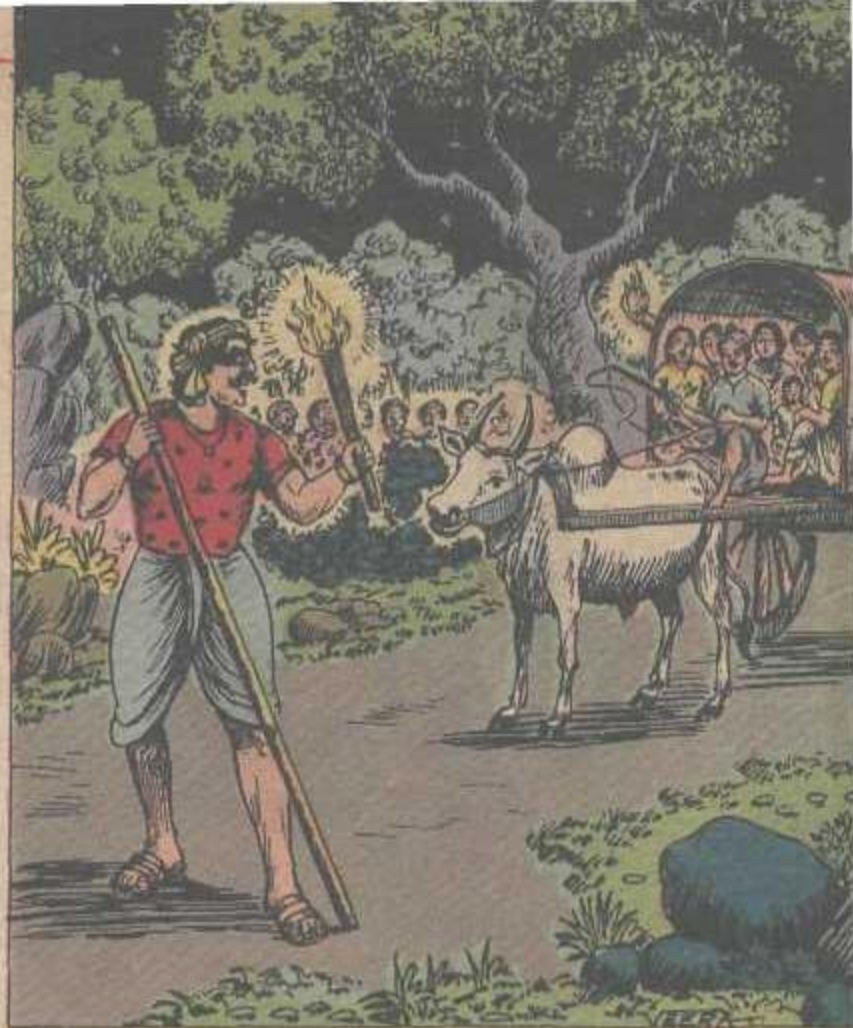
One night, a wealthy gentleman, along with his wife and children, were going that way in a cart. As he was on a long journey to attend a wedding, the man carried a lot of cash; his wife wore many ornaments. The time



was nearing midnight. Suddenly, the cart was stopped by a strong-built man. He had a torch in one hand, and held a long stick by the other. He really looked fearsome. The gentleman in the cart cried out, "Ah! A robber!"

On hearing this, the man, who looked like a wrestler, shouted, "I'm the bandit chief. You can see my men in that pit over there. You can't escape, so it'll be better if you hand over to me all the money and valuables you're carrying. I shall then let you go back, otherwise your life will be in danger. If you hesitate for a moment, I shall call my men. I don't have to tell you what they would do to you." The man threatened them with dire consequences.

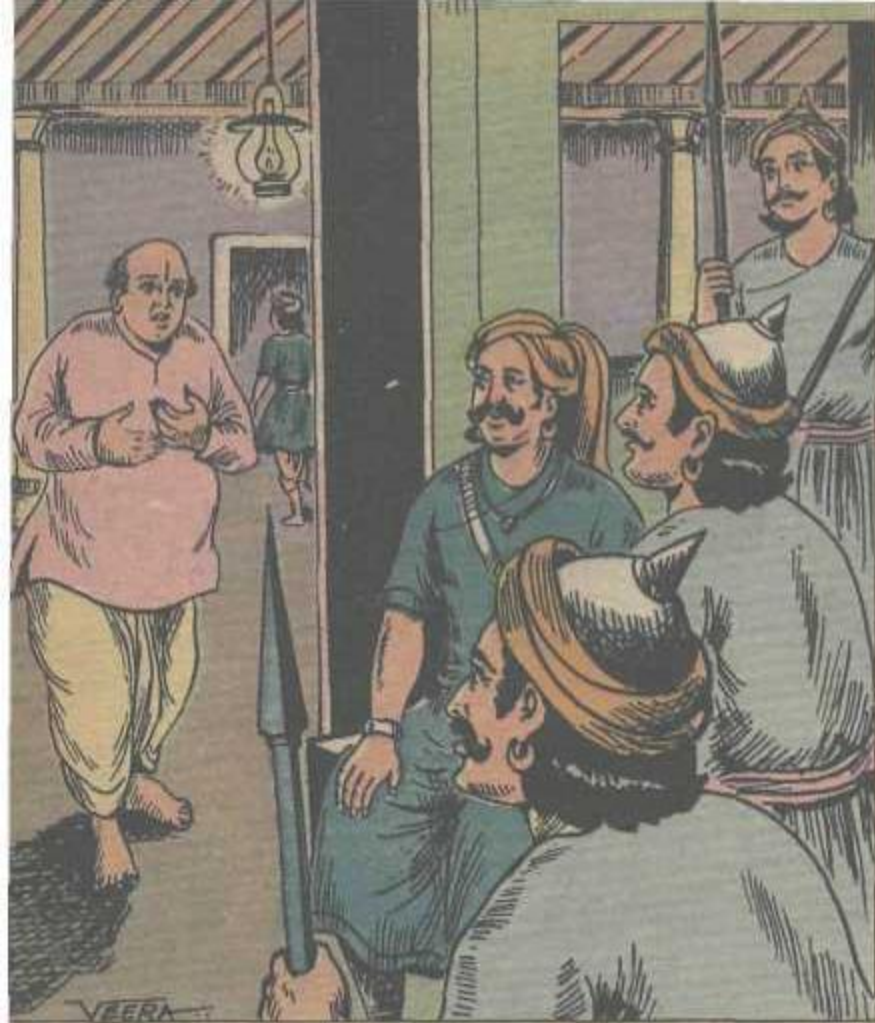
Those inside the cart listened to him holding their breath, and looked towards the pit where the man waved his torch. And they could see a dozen fearful men holding daggers and sticks ready to obey his command. The gentleman and his family realised that there was no escape from them, so they handed to him all the money and jewellery they had with them. The bandit tied up everything in a piece of cloth and



allowed the cart to turn back and go the way it had come.

A little later, a trader came that way after closing his shop. The bandit accosted him and threatened him. "Part with your money! Or else my men over there will make a mincemeat of you." He then pointed to the men in the pit by waving his torch. The trader quietly handed him a bag and said, "I had had a poor collection today, just about fifty rupees. Here, you take all that!" He then turned towards the men in the pit and said in a louder voice so that they could hear him, "I've given your chief fifty thou-





sand rupees. Don't fail to take your full share from him!" He probably expected them to come out of the pit and quarrel with their chief for their share of the booty. The bandit examined the trader thoroughly to ensure that he had not kept more money elsewhere on him before he let him go.

The trader soon reached a choultry which unusually had a lot of soldiers. He went to their captain and told him about his experience. "I know where I met them in the forest. If we go immediately, we may be able to surround them. There are hardly

a dozen of them, and we can easily catch them."

The captain and the trader started for the forest, asking the soldiers to follow them from a distance. They were met by the bandit. He made the usual threat. He told the captain and the trader, who had covered part of his face to avoid recognition, "I advise you, part with your money here and now, or I'll call my men over there!"

But the captain was unnerved by his threat. He had a good look at the bandit and a glance at the pit supposed to harbour his men. All the while, he was also contemplating a strategy to catch all of them. He took the bandit unawares by suddenly catching hold of him by his strong arms. On hearing the captain's shout, his soldiers rushed and tied the bandit well with a rope.

The captain then ordered, "Go and catch his men in that pit!" The soldiers ran to the pit and jumped in. They did not meet with any resistance. In fact, all the robbers stood still. When the soldiers examined them closely, they found them to be mere effigies, cleverly made with the help of hay and





bamboo sticks!

The soldiers had a good laugh and went back to their captain to report. He asked them to take the bandit to the ashram nearby. "The sanyasi has been staying there for a long time. Perhaps he might recognise this bandit and tell us about his gang." They all then left for the ashram.

At the ashram, there was no trace of any sanyasi in the hut. The captain and his soldiers, however, found a lot of cash, jewellery and other valuables concealed in various places in

the hut. A greater surprise was when they came upon a dark flowing beard hanging from a peg on the wall!

The bandit who was watching all this gave out a loud laugh. "You need not search for the sanyasi in vain. You can find him if you were to fix that beard on my face! I am a sanyasi during the day, and a bandit at night. I had made those effigies to threaten people and extort money from them. I was responsible for all the robberies!"

Everybody was stupefied at the bandit's revelation.

He who holds his tongue saves his head.

He that stays in the valley shall never get over the hill.



यस्मिन् जीवति जीवन्ति बहवः स तु जीवति ।
काकोर्षि किं न कुरुते चञ्च्वा स्वोदरपूरणम् ॥

HE HAS MERELY COME TO SEE US; NO HARM SHALL COME TO YOU FROM HIM?



O, YAMA! I WISH THIS PARROT IS NEVER KILLED!



HOW CAN I PROMISE?
WHY NOT?



IT'S KALAPURUSHA, THE GOD OF TIME, WHO HAS TO DECIDE!



INDRA, WITH THE PARROT AND YAMA, BEFORE KALAPURUSHA.



KALAPURUSHA! SPARE THIS PARROT, PLEASE.

HOW CAN I?



MRITHYU, THE GOD OF DEATH, DECIDES THE MATTER!



THE DEVAS TAKE THE PARROT TO MRITHYU.

HAI, MY PARROT! WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?



HE'S DEAD AT THE MERE SIGHT OF MRITHYU! YAMA, HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?



IT WAS THE DECREE OF FATE THAT HE SHOULD DIE AT THE VERY SIGHT OF MRITHYU.



THE BRIDE CONCLUDES THE STORY...

NOBODY CAN, THEREFORE, OVERCOME FATE. I MUST MARRY THE SNAKE.



MY BELOVED, I WON'T LEAVE YOU!



He is truly living who helps many others to live. Even a crow knows how to feed itself. (But that is hardly living a life.)

SO THE GIRL MARRIES THE SNAKE AND SERVES HIM WITH DEVOTION. ONE NIGHT...



WHO ARE YOU? HOW COULD YOU COME HERE?

DON'T BE FRIGHTENED, MY DEAR! I'M YOUR HUSBAND!



NO! IT CAN'T BE! NO! I SHALL CONVINCE YOU!



HE TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO A SNAKE



BACK TO HUMAN FORM.

MY LORD!

MY BELOVED!



THE BRAHMIN HEARS ABOUT THE MIRACLE.

MY DEAR! WE MUST STOP OUR SON FROM BECOMING A SNAKE. I'VE A PLAN!!



THE BRAHMIN THINKS OF A PLAN. WHEN HIS SON IS IN HUMAN FORM, HE TAKES THE BODY OF THE SNAKE AND BURNS IT.



DHEERBAL, THE WISE MINISTER OF SURADHA, ENDS THE STORY...

THE BRAHMIN AND HIS WIFE LIVED HAPPILY THEREAFTER, WITH THEIR SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.



KARATAKA CONCLUDES THE STORY



DAMANAKA! DHEERBAL SAVED THE KING WITH HIS WISDOM AND STATECRAFT. SUCH PEOPLE DESERVE TO BE COUNSELLORS?

AND NOT FOOLS LIKE YOU!



MY DEAR KARATKA, I DID EVERYTHING WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS.



को धर्मो भूतदया किं सौख्यमरोगिता जगति जन्तोः ।
कः स्नेहः सद्भावः किं पाण्डित्यं परिच्छेदः ॥

IDIOT! YOU'VE BROUGHT PERIL TO OUR KING'S LIFE!

B-BUT!

YOU DON'T HEED THE ADVICE OF FRIENDS. THIS REMINDS ME OF ANOTHER STORY.

PLEASE TELL ME THAT STORY

IT'S A VERY FUNNY STORY!

ONE WINTER NIGHT, A GROUP OF MONKEYS IN A FOREST...

OH! IT'S DREADFULLY COLD! HOOO!

HOO! HOOH! WOHHOO!

A FIREFLY FLIES THAT WAY.

LOOK! LOOK!

IT'S FIRE! CATCH, CATCH IT! QUICK!

HERE! GO!

THE MONKEYS CATCH HOLD OF A FIREFLY, FOOLISHLY BELIEVING IT TO BE FIRE. THEY GATHER DRY LEAVES AND PLACE THEM ON THE FIREFLY.

LET'S KEEP IT BURNING.

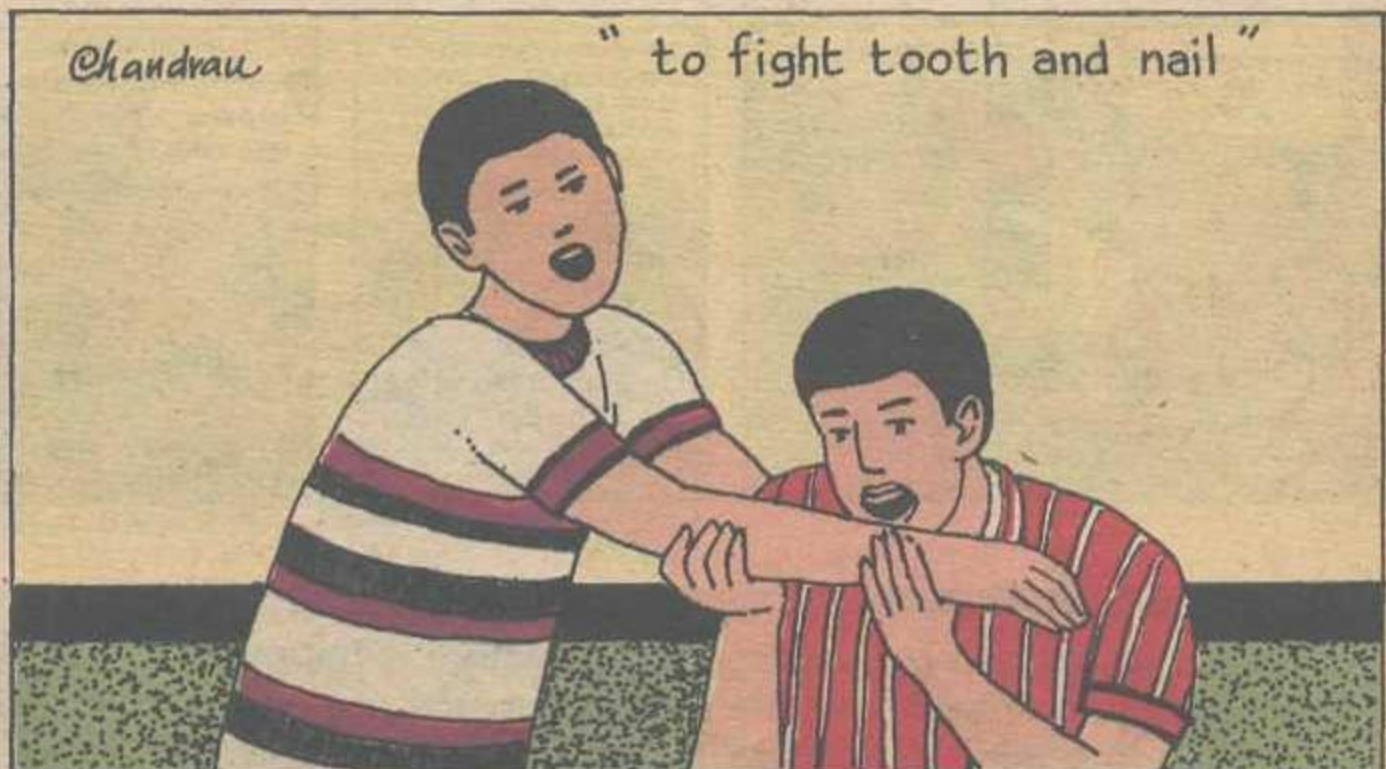
OOPH...
OOOPH!

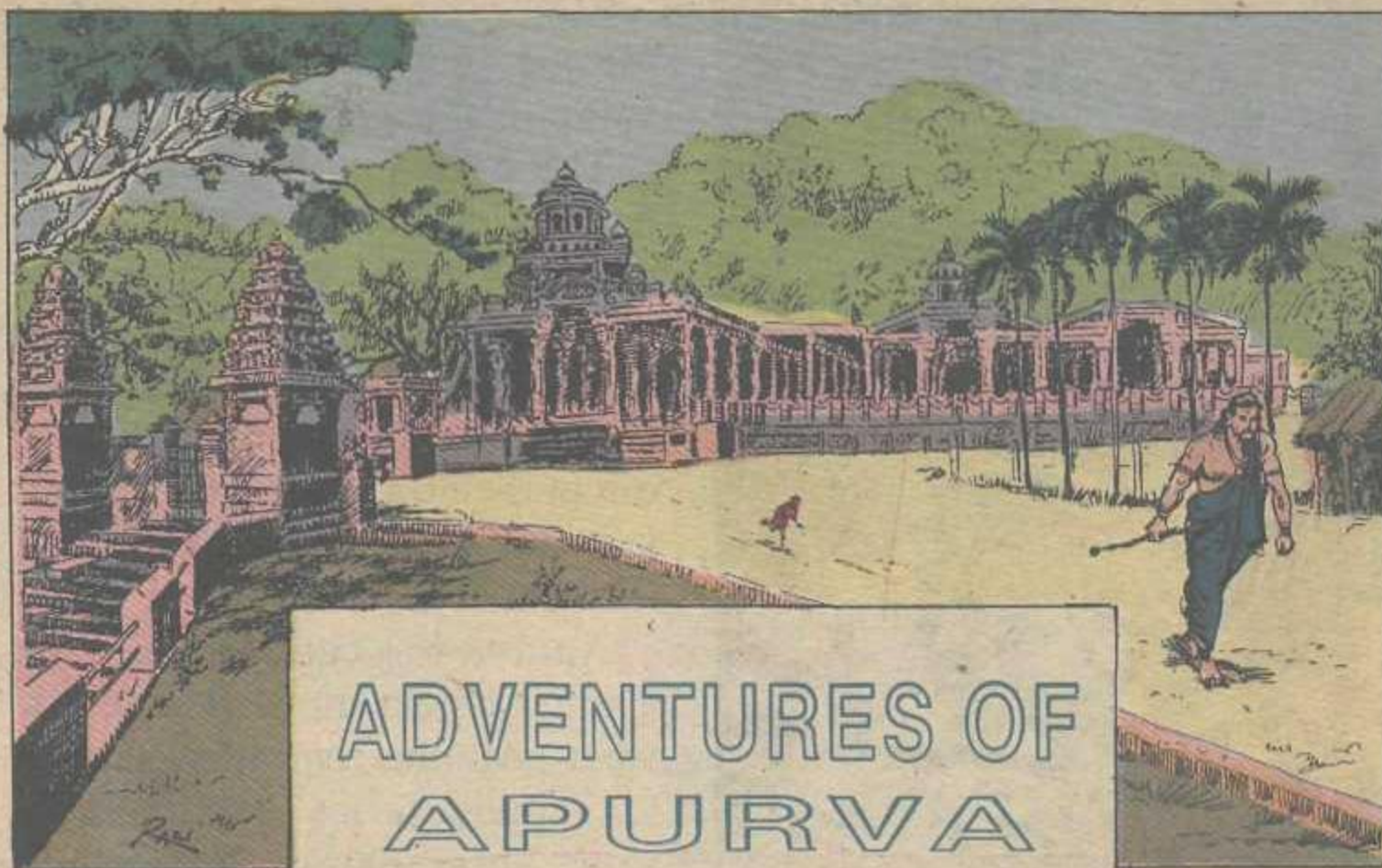
What is piety if not kindness for all, where is happiness without sound health, where is affection without goodwill, what is scholarship without the sense of discrimination?

Armoury of Teeth and Nails!

When they were left out of their school anniversary programme, her best friend went to J.R. Lakshmi (of Mysore) and said, "We must fight tooth and nail for a place in the drama." In her excitement, Lakshmi merely nodded, but when she went back home she wondered, can one's teeth and nails go for a fight? The expression, *to fight tooth and nail*, means to fight fiercely, with great energy and determination. In other words, you do everything you can in order to achieve something. This is same as another expression *to leave no stone unturned*, which also means, you try every way you can think of to achieve something. You can also *fight* something (an idea, suggestion, proposition) *tooth and nail*. In the absence of any other arms, children do use their nails (to scratch) and teeth (to bite) when forced to fight, don't they?

Shivabhakta Gurung, of Kalyan, has often watched birds in flight. But what fascinated him most was, in every flight, he would see only one type of bird— either crows or pigeons or swallows. He would never find a crow among pigeons, or a pigeon among swallows. He sought an explanation from his uncle, a keen bird-watcher himself. And he told Shivabhakta, "Birds of a feather flock together." That is a characteristic peculiar to birds. He was also, told that the expression is a proverb, used for referring to people with similar characters or beliefs or interests finding company in each other. Maybe birds easily distinguish their kind by merely looking at the feathers!





ADVENTURES OF APURVA

11

(Apurva, who had emerged from a Yajna performed by a Himalayan Yogi, is now a young man. But he continues to be tiny in size. He has just come to know that a wicked Tantrik is planning to take hold of a strange gem, known as the Moonlight Diamond, worn by the princess, with the chief minister's help.)

It was midnight when the Tantrik came out of the chief minister's house. When he walked along the road, he could hardly be seen because he had put on a dark gown, and there was a lush crop of dark hair on his head and a flowing dark beard that touched his chest.

What kind of rites does he wish

to practise with the Moonlight diamond? Where did he get the knowledge of what he was going to do? Apurva was anxious to find answers to these questions. He followed him stealthily. His footsteps were so soft that there was no question of the Tantrik suspecting that someone was walking behind him, keeping

AT THE CAVE OF THE WITCH





some distance.

But the Tantrik did not walk for long. As soon as he was outside the town, a bear came out of a bush and silently offered its back to the Tantrik. The fellow sat on it and it ran at some speed.

Running was no problem for Apurva. It never tired him. He followed the bear at a matching speed.

They reached the river. The Tantrik got off the bear's back and, instead of showing any gratitude to the creature, twisted its ear and said, "You stupid beast! You seem to have forgotten how to run! Now, go and wait

for me in the forest, near the vampire's banyan tree."

The bear snorted and turned back and disappeared in the darkness. Apurva was moved to pity for the creature. He, too, used animals to carry him, but the animals served him with love, out of their own will. The Tantrik kept the bear under a spell and tormented the creature.

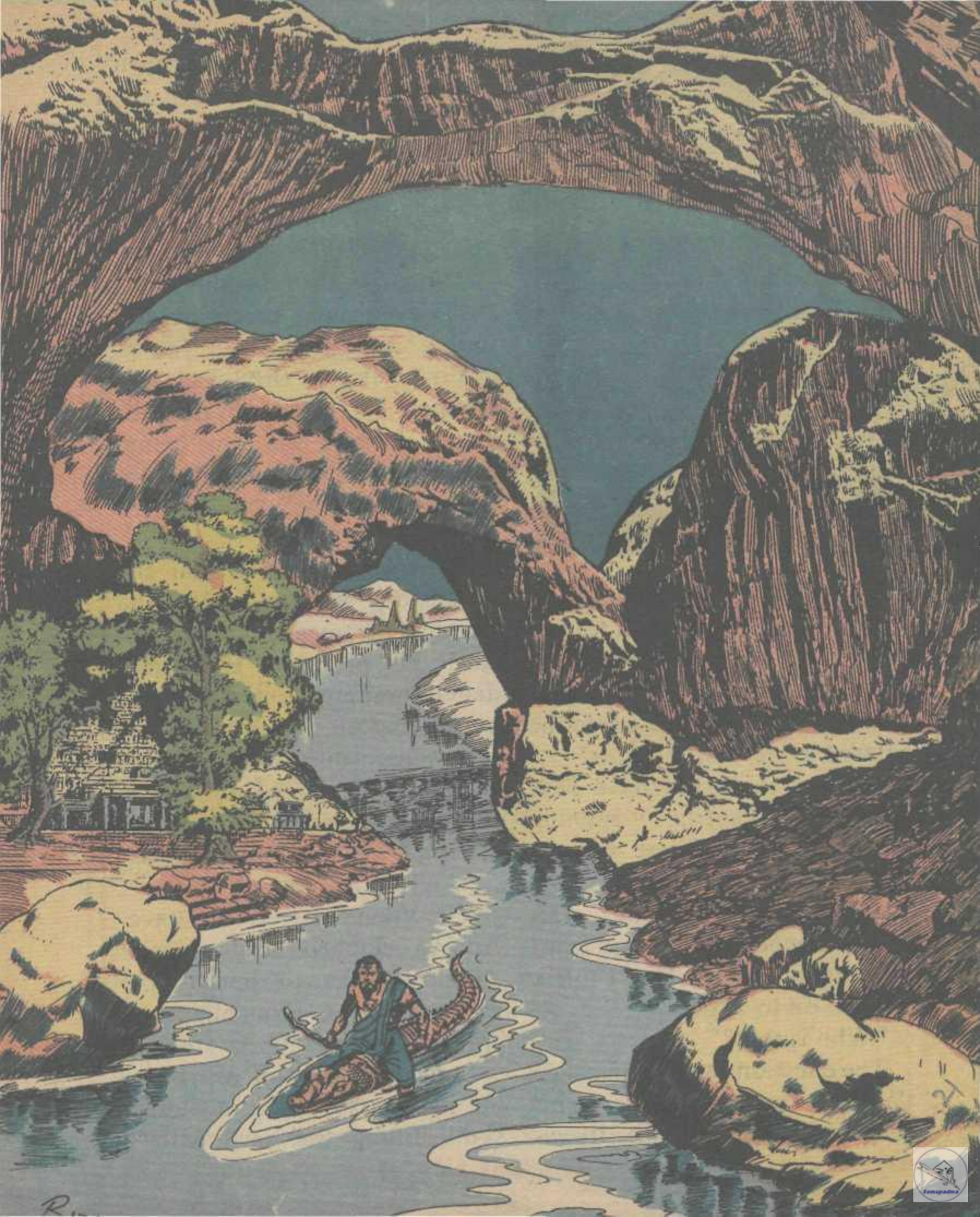
Apurva was curious to see the Tantrik's next move. The fellow went near the river and clapped his hands thrice and chanted some abracadabra. Before long there were a few splashes in the water. Apurva could then see a pair of bluish dots on the surface of the river. He understood that it was a huge crocodile.

The crocodile came close to the shore and the Tantrik jumped on to its back. "Swim as fast as you can!" he commanded, sitting on it legs astride.

Lo and behold, the crocodile swam at great speed. Apurva ran along the river-bank, keeping pace with it.

There was a thin moon in the sky. Along the bushy banks of the river jackals howled and hyenas screamed. Once or twice a tiger roared. Apurva, of course,







did not know what fear is.

But he faced a problem when a stream of the river entered a gorge amidst hills. In fact, it was a dark tunnel and the crocodile entered it.

Apurva could not have kept track of the Tantrik by running along the bank. There was no time to lose. He jumped into the water and began to swim.

The crocodile stopped in front of a gaping cave. The Tantrik hopped on to a rock.

"Who is that?"

The question came from inside the cave. Apurva had never heard such a shrill eerie voice. It was

fearful indeed and obviously it was an old woman's.

"I am Vir Vikat, your most obedient servant. May I come in?"

"You may. But who else is with you?" asked the voice.

"None but the crocodile!"

"Look around carefully, you fool!"

Vir Vikat, the Tantrik, strained his eyes and tried to locate if there was any being, human or animal, anywhere in the tunnel. But he could not see Apurva.

Apurva understood that the mysterious woman inside the cave had the uncanny capacity to smell his presence. He immediately muttered a hymn taught by his master. The hymn made others insensible to his presence.

"No, holy witch, nobody is there with me or anywhere around," Vir Vikat assured her.

"All right. Come in!"

Vir Vikat entered the cave. Apurva climbed another rock and slowly began to approach the woman's cave, crouching and crawling on the slippery stones.

Some strange stuff was burning in a vessel made of human skull, filling the cave with a



yellowish light. Leaning against the wall sat a woman, her legs outstretched. Nobody could guess her age. It could be even three hundred years! That is what her appearance suggested. Her body was a skeleton but covered by a radiant skin. Here eyes were spooky and awfully red. Her finger-nails curled like serpents.

"What now? Any progress?" she asked the Tantrik.

The Tantrik prostrated himself before her and said, after getting up, "Yes, indeed! The diamond is now with the princess and I hope to lay my hands on it very soon.

"Lay your hands on the diamond alone?" asked the witch.

Vir Vikat kept looking at her. The witch laughed loudly. It sounded like a cracker bursting inside a tin drum.

"I don't understand you, O holy witch. Do you wish me to take hold of something else along with the diamond?" Vir Vikat asked at last.

"Do I call you a fool for nothing? How do I care for anything? Do I care even for your diamond?" demanded the witch.

"No, indeed not," agreed Vir Vikat. "You're guiding me to get the diamond for my sake. It's out



of pure kindness!"

"No, you fool and hypocrite! I've never known kindness, pure or impure. And you know that very well. I've no desire for any ordinary power like that of a king. But you're dying for it! Well, there's no harm in my helping you to get that power since I know its secret. You see, to know a secret or to have the capacity to achieve something and yet not to use that capacity ever is very difficult. That's why I'm guiding you to become the king of kings, the monarch of the world!"

"Thank you, O holy witch!"





"Mere thanks won't do. You must pay me for my help."

"What's your desire, O holy witch?"

"I've only one desire. I must get back my youth. Bring me not the diamond alone, but also the princess along with her diamond. I'll transfer her youthfulness into my limbs!" said the witch, and she laughed again.

Even the brave Apurva felt a creep rising in his spine.

"But you tried to do that earlier also, with other young women. They were sacrificed, but you continued to be—well—not quite young, I must say!"

"You fool! My experiment with them failed, that's all! But one learns through experience. I'll not fail with the princess. I know that she fulfils all the conditions necessary for the rite. I'll suck her youth into mine. Ha ha! How wonderful it'll be for me to grow young once again! Vir Vikat, can you imagine how beautiful I will look?" asked the witch, laughing again.

"You look beautiful, even as you are!"

"Shut up, you hypocrite, you stupid flatterer. Do as I say or get out!" shrieked the witch.

—To continue

It is the blood of the soldier that makes the general great.



THE MAGIC TAMBOURINE



In a wee little hamlet, once upon a time, there lived an old widow and her son. Kundang, for that was the boy's name, had an innocent and child-like nature and, therefore, people took him to be a simpleton.

One day, the three village vagabonds, Colak, Colik, and Dholak, known for their naughty pranks, were wandering by the stream when they heard someone singing.

"I am off to sell my downy ass,

And bring a snowy little

comely lass.

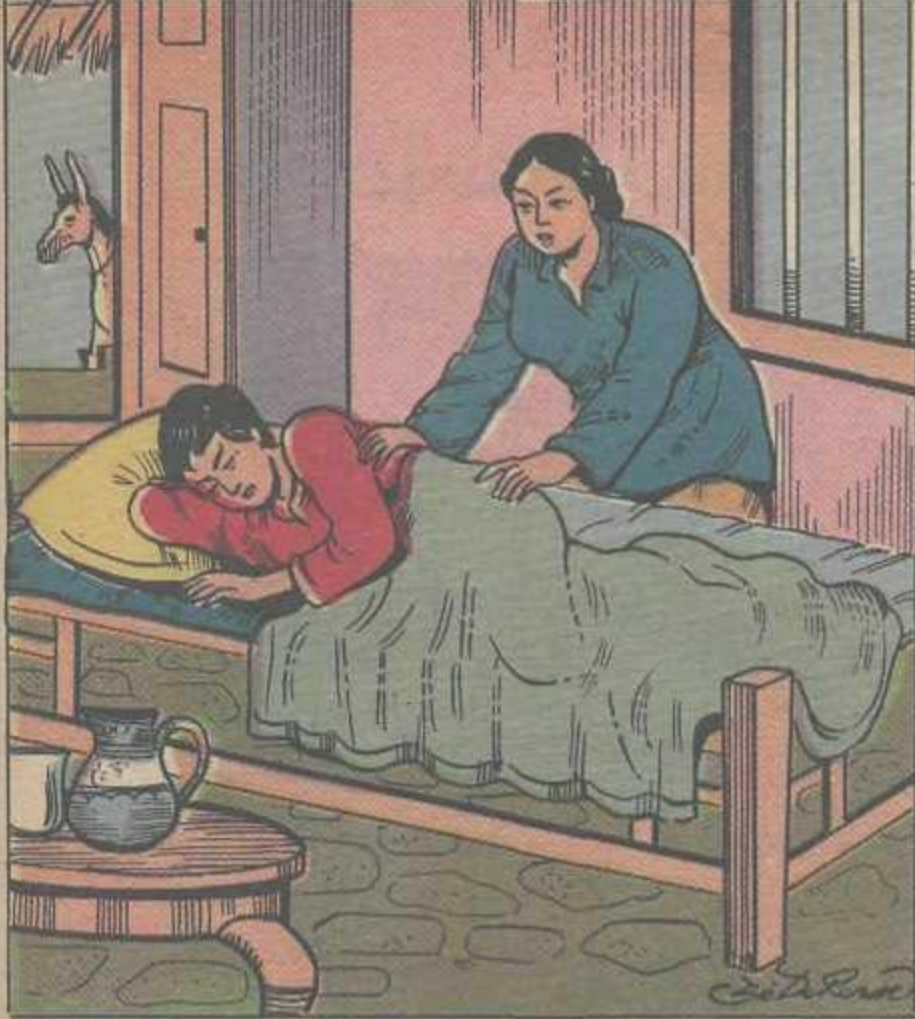
Oh! I will soon take a worthy wife,

Then live ever after a happy life."

Peering through the thick bush they saw Kundang, eyes half-closed, blissfully basking in the warm sunshine beside the brook. His donkey grazed on the pastures nearby. The three at once gave a gleeful chuckle. For, they seldom missed any chance to play their wicked tricks upon him.

One of them threw a big stone into the stream, splashing water





all over Kundang. Shaken from his sweet reverie, the boy turned back and saw the three friends laughing heartily.

"Good morning, reverend sir," they greeted him, bowing ceremoniously.

"What's this fairy tale about ass, lass, wife and life?" asked Colak.

"Tomorrow I'm going to sell my donkey in the market," replied Kundang dreamily.

"How much do you want for it?" put in Colik.

"Three hundred rupiahs! You see, he's very clever and hard-working," said Kundang, as the

beast brayed loudly.

"Hurrah! Our Kundang is going to be rich and will soon take a wife!" they shouted in one voice and walked away.

Very early the next morning, even before the cock had begun to crow, Kundang's mother shook him up from sleep and said, "Last night I had a dream, a beautiful dream it was! I saw there's good fortune awaiting us in the town beyond the hills."

"So what?" asked her son still half-asleep.

"Let's pack up and shift to the town!" said the simple woman.

"Then, what about our donkey?" he asked.

"On our way we'll halt at the market and sell it off. We were already planning to sell it, isn't that so?" said his mother, adding, "You proceed to the market while I gather some fruit and berries from the woods. Mind you, for not less than three hundred rupiahs should you let the beast go," strictly instructed the cautious woman.

Kundang had not gone very far when he met one of the three rogues. "What a healthy sheep!" Dholak exclaimed, patting the animal. "But you had said you



wanted to sell an ass, didn't you?"

"You fool! Do you have only buttons for your eyes? Can't you recognise an animal as big as this?" replied the young man angrily.

Dholak knelt down and carefully examined the animal, feeling it from tail to the head. Then suddenly he burst out into guffaws. "Ho! Ho! Ho! You think this gentle sheep to be a donkey, eh! Of course, people take you as a simpleton. Just give it to me for thirty rupiahs, which is much more than its worth."

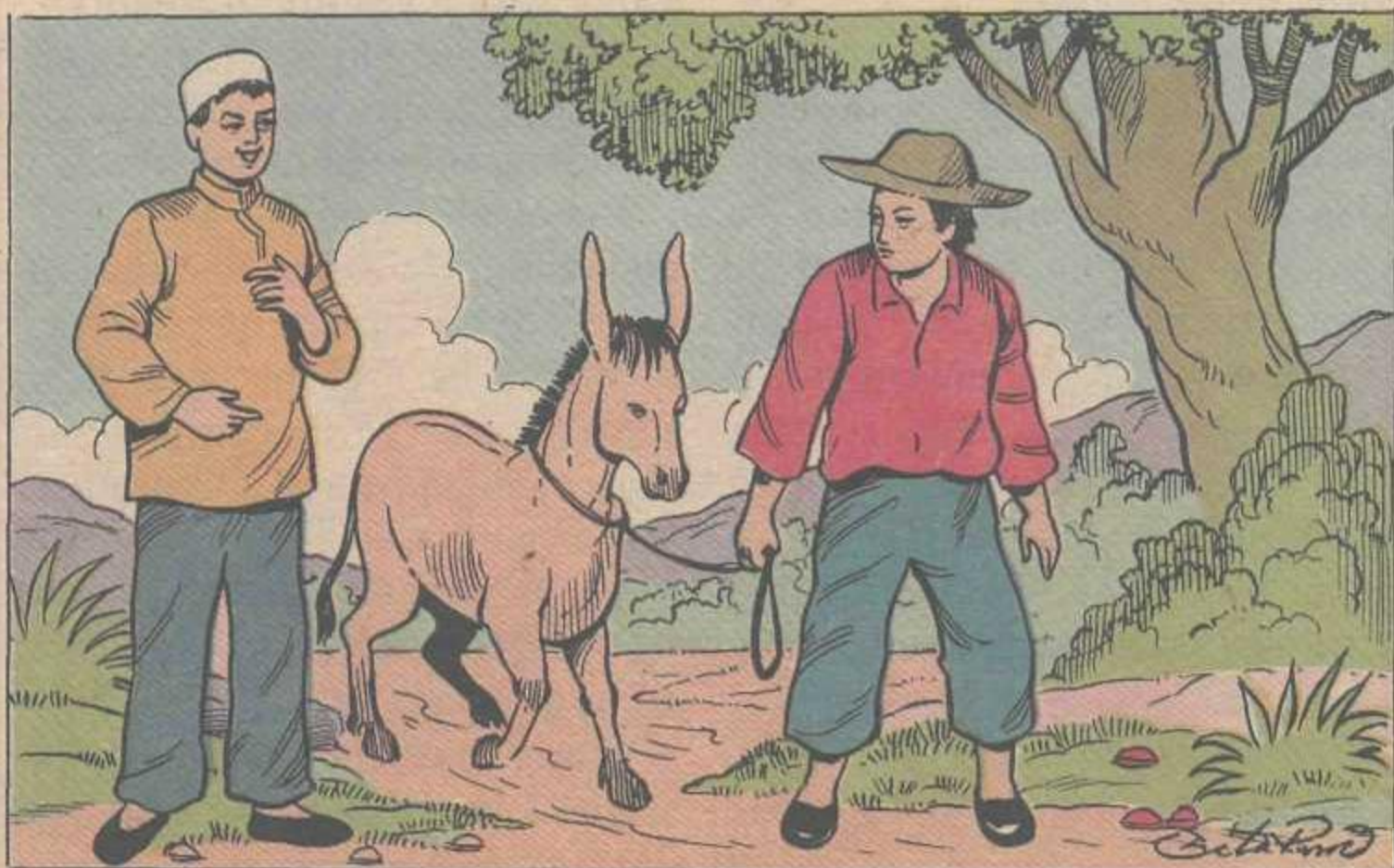
"Get off my way. Whatever may it be, a donkey or a monkey,

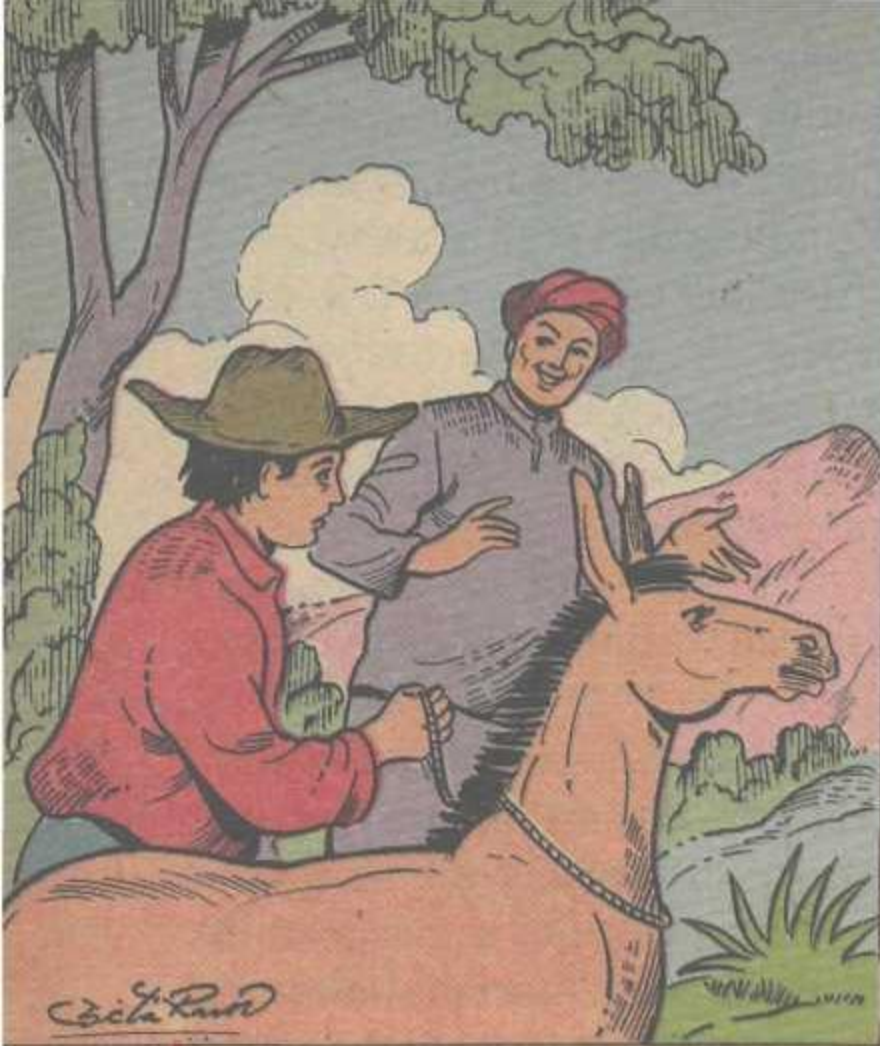
I won't sell it for a rupiah less than three hundred," retorted Kundang and storde away.

He had only gone a few yards when he came across Colak. "How much do you expect for this sickly little sheep?" he asked, saluting him.

"It's no sheep! It's an ass, you fathead!" shouted back the angry boy.

"Is it so?" answered Colak, feigning astonishment. He then began scrutinising the beast and in the process got underneath its stomach and started imitating, very accurately indeed, the sound of a sheep. "This animal will only fetch you a meagre ten rupiahs. I





offer you fifty for it. Give it to me and you don't have to go all the way to the market."

Kundang most adamantly shook his head and without a word continued on his way. However, he now began to wonder whether the animal he was leading was really a donkey or a sheep. Two people had said it was a sheep. He patted its back, pulled its ears, and even punched its stomach. There emanated a long loud bray. Convinced that the beast was an ass, he trodded along.

As he turned round the corner, he almost collided with Colik, the

third ruffian. "My good friend, tell me how much you want for your little lamb. I'll buy it rightaway," he said, in an assuring voice.

This was rather too much for the poor boy. He began to have grave doubts. How could his donkey change into a sheep and he couldn't make out the difference?

"Three hundred rupiahs is what I want for it, not a rupiah less," he sternly replied.

"What! A good for nothing creature and you're demanding a fortune for it? Rest content with fifty, which is far more than this animal will ever fetch you," said Colik with a gesture of finality.

"You nincompoop! Just get lost and leave me in peace," Kundang shouted furiously.

But alas! His mind was in utter confusion. He had to find a good buyer for his donkey or whatever it might be. As he was thus thinking, the three companions once again appeared and pressed him to part with the animal. He most vehemently refused, but they threatened him with dire consequences.

Some passers-by who had stopped to see what the commo-

tion was all about whispered to Kundang to agree to the bargain. "These ruffians are dangerous!" they warned and quickly disappeared from the scene.

So, poor Kundang was compelled to part with the beast for a meagre sum. Sadly he wended his way to the banyan tree where his mother waited for him.

She was happy to see her son return so soon and without the donkey. "Son, you must have surely got a good bargain!" she said cheerfully.

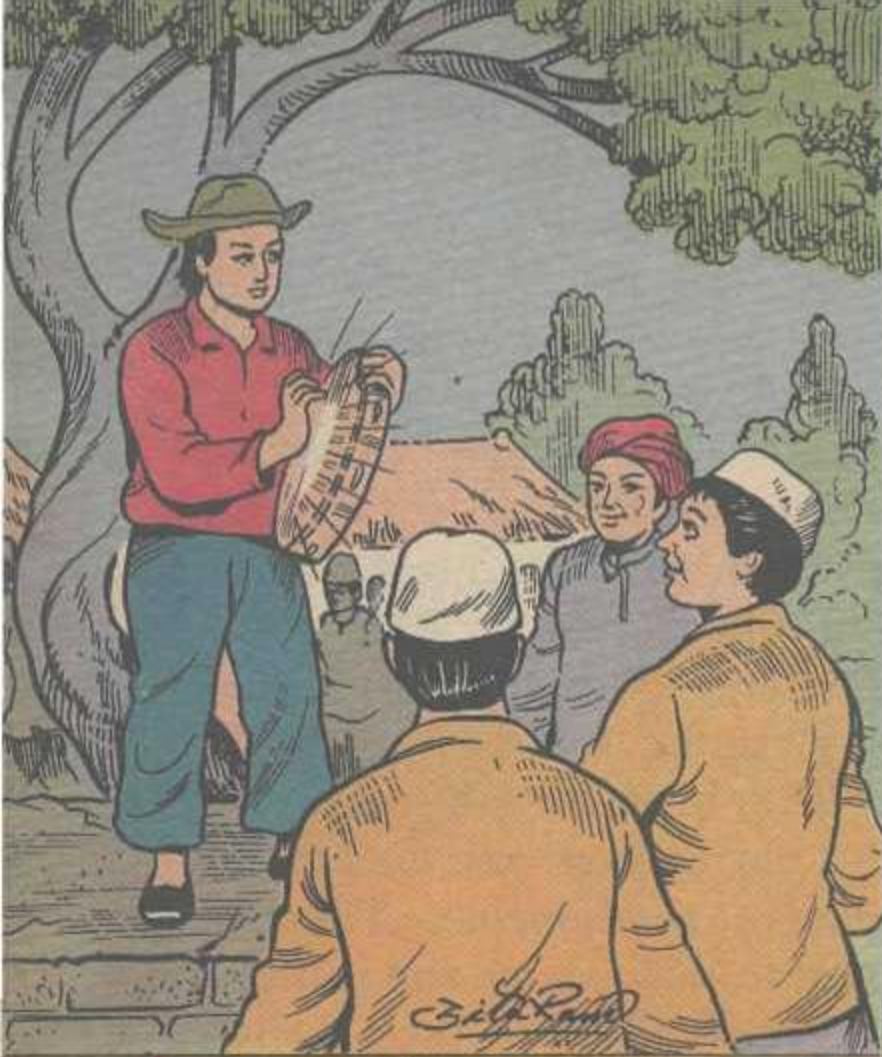
But when she counted the money that her son handed her, her face darkened and she shrieked in anger. "What! How

could you give away such a young and handsome donkey for only fifty rupiahs? Now go back at once and return either with the beast or with the whole amount!"

Kundang plodded toward the market again. He scolded himself a thousand times for having given in to those great bullies. But what could he have done? Suddenly a brilliant idea flashed in his mind.

With brisk steps he hurried to the old hawker and bought an ancient tambourine. Then he went to three shops and showing the tambourine to their owners told them something in confidence.





The three ruffians were rather surprised to meet him merrily whistling, with his chin up and a faint smile playing on his face. "Hello, master sheep-seller, you seem to be in high spirits today!" they said, walking up to him.

"Come, my friends, come. Let's celebrate in honour of this magic instrument," he replied leading them to a snack-bar. The three silently followed him.

"Gentlemen, enjoy yourselves. I'm so happy today! Getting rid of that weird animal, which was an ass but which turned into a sheep, has indeed brought me good fortune!" he said in a sing-

song manner.

The three companions, surprised and amused, ate to their heart's content. When they had finished, their host summoned the shopkeeper and asked how much he owed him. "Ten rupiahs only," came the reply.

Kundang smiled and no sooner had he nodded and played a rhythmic beat on the tambourine than the owner at once exclaimed, "Thank you, Sir! Come again!" Kundang's three guests only gave a blank look at each other.

Then the peasant boy led them to a fruit-vendor. Once again not only did the greedy fellows stuff themselves but filled their bags, too. Their host, as before, played his rhythmic beats, whereupon the seller said, "I hope you and your friends enjoyed my juicy, fresh fruit. Good-bye!"

Next they halted at a stall selling hot creamy milk. They drank and then Kundang beat the tambourine, and the vendor smiled and exclaimed, "Thank you! Thank you!"

The three friends who were now unable to contain their curiosity, asked, "Well, how is it that you don't have to ever pay



the bills?"

"Ha, ha! This is a wonderful tambourine I happened to come across most unexpectedly. Its jingling sound makes people think that they have already been paid," replied Kundang with a laugh. "Of course, it works only once a week!" he added.

The three rogues who had heard of such a magic tambourine in their folk tales, but never thought that it really existed, were unable to conceal their desire to possess it. "Dear brother, why don't you sell it to us?" they asked.

"No, never shall I part with it," he firmly replied.

"We offer you one hundred rupiahs along with your beast," said one of them thinking that getting rid of the animal will at least bring them some luck.

"What, only one hundred for the most valuable thing in the world?" exclaimed the farmer boy.

"Another two hundred then," added the second friend.

"No, no! I'll accept nothing less than four thousand rupiahs and a potful of silver pieces," answered Kundang with firmness.

Wherefrom will they gather so



much wealth? So, selling whatever little property each of them had, thinking that they would easily make up for the loss later, they paid the demanded price in exchange for the tambourine. They also did not forget to hand over the ass, for Kundang had become lucky only after parting with the animal!

Now Kundang headed straight to the three shops, whose owners were in fact his good friends and cleared the dues. He then hurried to the joyous arms of his mother. They had enough to start their life anew in the town beyond the hills. As for the donkey, he was



destined to live with them, they thought.

The three companions waited for a week to work with their magical instrument. All agog with excitement, they marched to a posh restaurant and ordered many delicious dishes. Having eaten they sat back in their chairs with an appeased look. "Waiter," called one of them, "may we have our bill, please?"

"Sixty-five rupiahs, sir," came the reply.

Dholak nodded his head, as he had seen Kundang do, and played on the tambourine. But the waiter only stood silently without uttering a single syllable. The three friends wondered what went wrong. "Perhaps I played it rather too softly," thought Dholak and began shaking the instrument very hard indeed.

"Pay up, gentlemen, and don't disturb the others!" said the manager.

"But-er-er—we've no money with us! This music is..." they stammered rather nervously.

That immediately brought the owner to the scene, who beat them black and blue and threw them outside. "You rascals! Not a farthing on you and you're behaving like kings!"

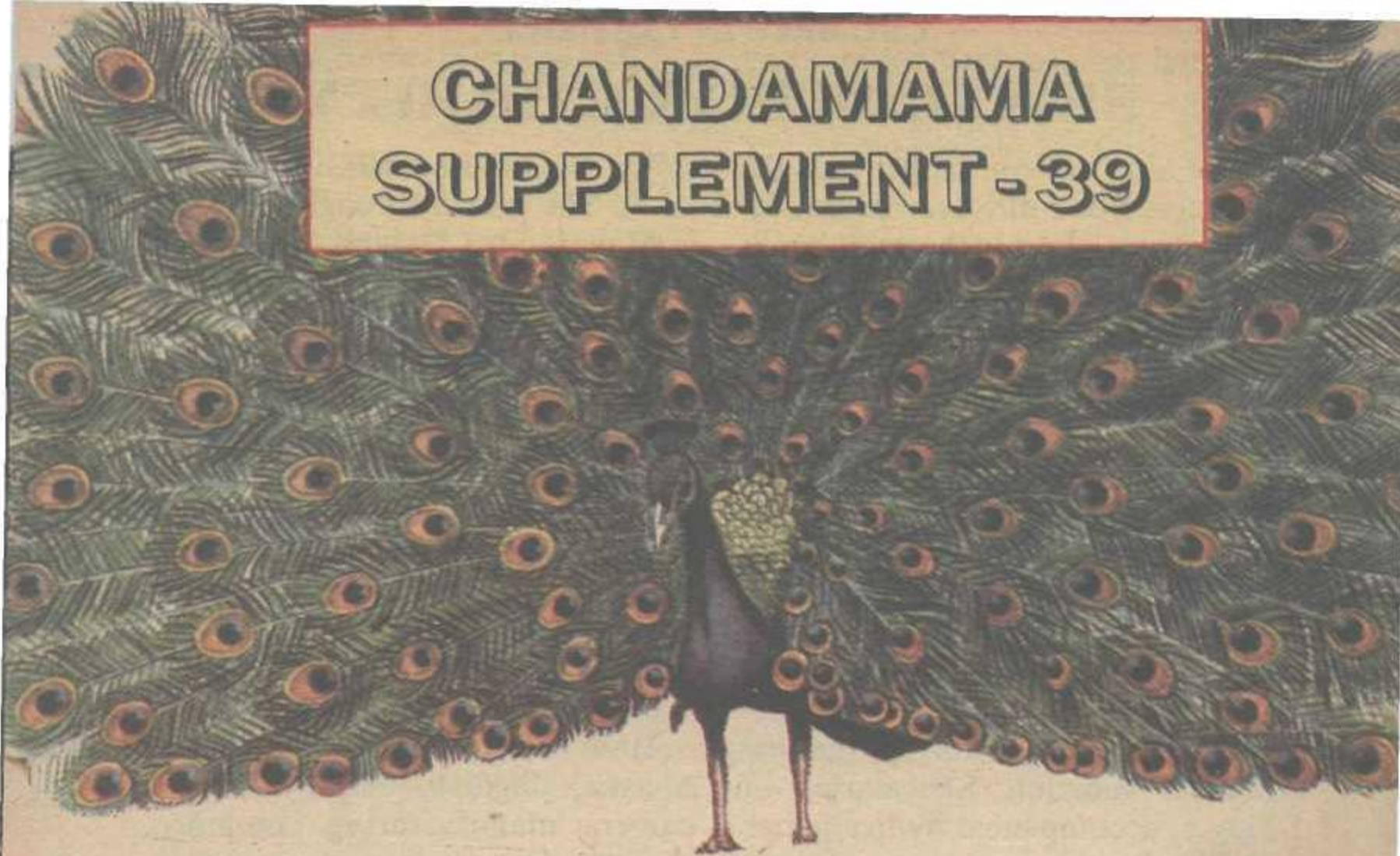
Dazed, the three companions sat gloomily for long. "Let's find out the wicked chap!" they at last said, getting up.

But where was Kundang? A week had passed. He and his mother—and their priceless donkey—had settled down in the town. Kundang had launched a business and was beginning to do well!

—Retold by Anup Kishore Das



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-39



BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

PEACOCK

'As proud as the peacock' goes the saying. True, the peacock is the most proud-looking among birds. It is a large bird belonging to the pheasant family. The most distinguishing feature of the bird is its large tail, more than 1.2 metres long. The bird looks really majestic, when it spreads out its tail like a fan. One can then see the beautiful blue-and-green spots on the tail. There is a copper brown border around these 'eyes'. A large crest adorns the bird's head.

The female bird, peahen, has no tail. Its body is a mottled brown, with shades of green and blue on the breast. The peahen, too, sports a crest. She lays not more than five cream-coloured eggs at a time.

The birds generally eat grain, tender shoots of plants, and insects. They are also known to have eaten lizards and snakes at times.

The peacock is India's national bird. It is also the mount (*Vahana*) of Lord Kartikeya.

SKATING FOR CHARITY

Her aim was not to get into the Guinness Book of Records. But for all we know, she is in the good books of a College of Ophthalmology in Navsari, Gujarat. No, she is not even a student of that college. Sheetal Pandaya is barely 8 years old and in the IIIrd standard of an English medium school in Baroda. She earned the gratitude of the Navsari college for raising funds for the institution. And she achieved this by roller-skating the 1,600km distance between Bombay and Delhi.

This happened during the last summer vacation. She started on May 1, accompanied by her father, Jagdish Pandaya, and two others on rollers and escorted by some others in a car. They were flagged off by Mr. Sunil Dutt, film star and Member of Parliament. She reached Delhi on June 22. Sheetal's adventure trip was sponsored by a battery-manufacturing company. A well-known hotel in Bombay raised Rs. 50,000, while the donations

collected en route totalled over Rs. 2 lakhs. She passed through 43 towns in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Haryana before reaching Delhi.

This summer's feat was actually the fourth Sheetal was undertaking. When she was five, she went roller-skating from Delhi to Bombay raising money for cancer patients. A year later, she did a 600km trip from Gandhi Nagar (Ahmedabad) to Bombay. When she was seven, she skated from Calcutta to Kanpur (1,000km), after a send-off by none other than Mother Teresa.

How did it all start? An athlete himself, Jagdish, employed in a camera manufacturing company, trained her in skating when she was

three years old, as he was struck by her aptitude and tenacity. He took her for marathon skating an year later. She now practises along 60km every day.

Her ambition is to try her skill abroad, and who knows she will not prove she is the best in the world and earn a place in Guinness and other record books?



DO YOU KNOW?

1. Where are the Elephanta Caves situated?
2. When was Mount Everest scaled first? By whom?
3. An Indian mystic of the 15th century was claimed by both the Hindus and Muslims as belonging to their respective faith. Who was he?
4. He came to India, converted many Indians, and died a martyr here in the first century A.D. Who was he?
5. Who was India's first woman doctor?
6. Who is India's first woman judge to sit on the Supreme Court bench?
7. He piloted the first flight of an Indian airline? Who was he?
8. When did the Indian Air Force come into being?
9. Who was the first Chief of the Indian Air Force?
10. Which is the oldest ship-building yard in the country? Who established it?
11. When was the Children's Film Society of India set up?
12. Which State in India has the largest number of cattle?
13. When was the tiger chosen as the National Animal of India?
14. When was postage stamp first issued in India?
15. Which is the most sacred pilgrim centre for the Sikhs?

ANSWERS

1. On Elephanta Island, near Bombay harbour.
2. In 1953. By India's Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary of New Zealand, who were members of a British expedition.
3. Kabir.
4. Saint Thomas, one of the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ. He arrived in a place in what is now known as Kerala in 52 A.D. and was assassinated 16 years later in the church he built on a mount near Madras named after him. His remains were later interred in a church in the city.
5. Dr. Anandibai Joshi, who took her M.D. in the U.S.A. in 1886 and practised in Maharashtra for about a year. She died on February 26, 1887, because of ill-health.
6. Justice Fathima Beevi of Kerala.
7. J.R.D. Tata.
8. October 8, 1932. The day is observed every year as the Air Force Day.
9. Subroto Mukerjee.
10. The Hindustan Shipyard in Visakhapatnam was set up in 1941 by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company of Bombay.
11. In 1955, to produce movies, to finance production of films, and to organise national and international festivals of children's films. The Seventh International Children's Films Festival was held in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, in November 1991.
12. Uttar Pradesh.
13. In November 1972. Till then the lion was the national animal. The change was made because the lion population was dwindling.
14. In 1852. The "Scinde Dawks" were also the first stamps issued in the whole of Asia.
15. Gurudwara Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar.



A 'Saiva' Monkey

Hanuman was a Rama *bhakta* (devotee). There was a monkey in Delhi, till recently, who apparently was a Siva *bhakta*. He lived on a tree under which is a Siva temple. Every morning, around 4, he would climb down the tree, stand in front of the *sanctum sanctorum*, with folded hands, facing the idol, for a few minutes before climbing back to his abode. Devotees visiting the temple during those early hours had been watching this phenomenon for over ten years and had extreme reverence for this "pious primate". The ageing monkey died on November 1, and his funeral is reported to have been attended by nearly 20,000 people. The body was washed in Ganga water and taken in procession to the Yamuna, in which it was immersed amidst holy chanting.




NEWS FLASH

Crow for Dinner

Incredible? Then go to Kisakata, the seacoast agricultural town in Japan, and you will find the people there eating crows. They seem to relish the dish, especially because they feel they are meting out a punishment to the ravenous birds for damaging their valuable crops worth 7,500 dollars in a year. An exercise started three years ago has succeeded in trapping nearly 200 birds in a month, which are promptly sent to the kitchens.



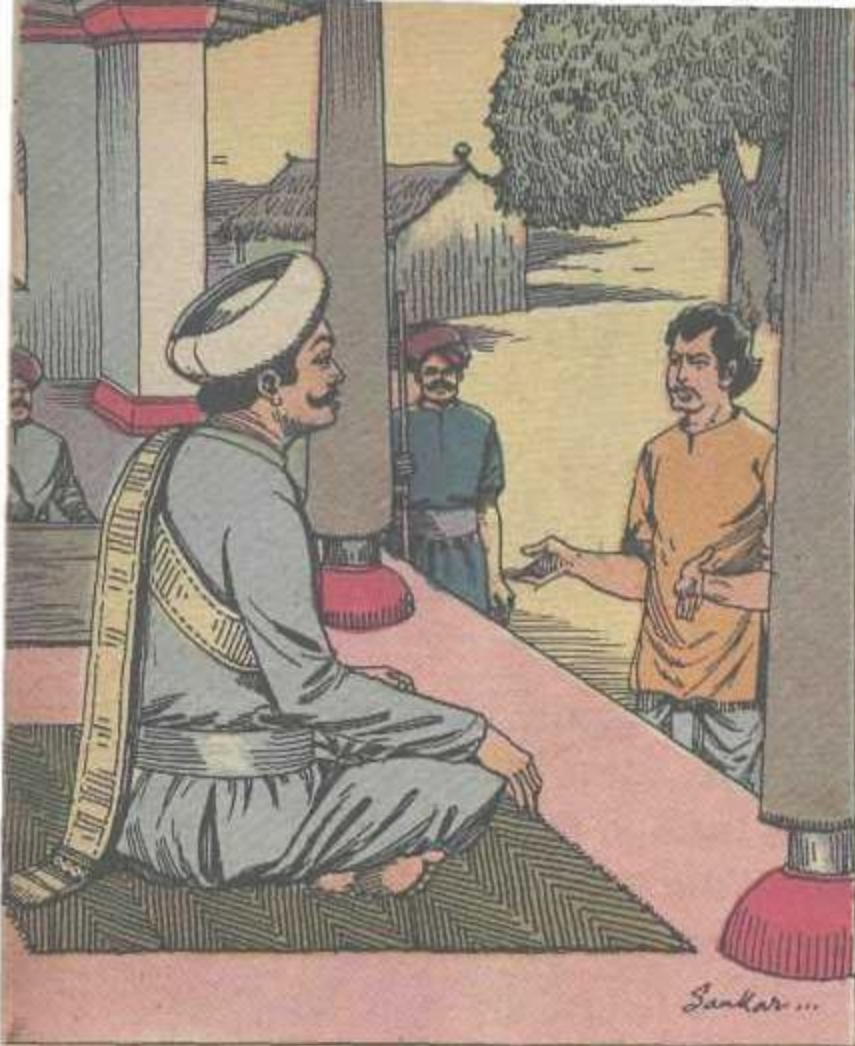
A full-page illustration on the left side of the page. It depicts King Vikramaditya, a man with a mustache, wearing a red tunic and a dark skirt, carrying a large sword. He is walking through a dark, rocky landscape. In the background, several skulls are visible on the rocks, and a small, pale, ghostly figure is seen in the distance. The overall atmosphere is dark and mysterious.

New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

CURSE AND COMPLIMENT

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunder-claps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O king, you seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite so as to achieve something. Tell me, why should you put yourself to such strain and discomfort in the dead of night? Agreed, you wish to do good to others. But suppose you get ridiculed by people in the



course of your good deed? Maybe, you wouldn't mind and would continue your mission. Listen to the story of Lokanathan and his fate. You'll then understand the futility of your purpose."

The vampire's narration went like this: Many years ago, there was this village known as Veeragram in Vinayapuri Zilla of Videha. Lokanathan was in the service of the village head. One day, he went to him with a plea: "Sir, I've a large family and I'm unable to look after them with the meagre salary that I get. If only my eldest son also could get a job, then probably we might be

able to manage. Would you be kind enough to oblige me?"

The village head thought awhile. "Look here, Lokanathan, you know ours is a small village. There's no scope for employing one more person. If you were to seek employment elsewhere, I don't mind keeping your son in your place."

Lokanathan accepted his advice and left the village job, which was then given to his son. The father went to work on a farm which he took on lease from a landlord. One day, a relation of his visited him. "It's a pity this village doesn't have a library. I shall help you set up one. But it should have a reliable keeper. Can you find a suitable person to look after the library?"

"That should not be a problem," replied Lokanathan, thinking of various possibilities. He convened a meeting of some of the prominent people of Veeragram and put the proposal before them. "That's a good idea. We're lucky someone has come forward to help us, too. A library has been a long felt need," remarked the elders. "You don't have to search for a person. You entrust the library to your son."



Soon the library was set up and Lokanathan's son was put in charge. In fact, the young man had even been helping his father on the farm whenever he had some time to spare from his village work. Now, he devoted all his time for the library, with the result Lokanathan really missed his help on the farm.

Everything was going smooth when, one day, the zilla chief called for the village head and told him, "It has come to the knowledge of the authorities that Veeragram has a rare ore and excavation work has to start soon. That means the village has to be evacuated. Go and inform the people. Let them shift to another village."

The village head was shocked. "I myself have been residing there for long. How can we shift all of a sudden? It's cruel to ask the villagers to leave bag and baggage. Where'll they go? No, sir, I won't undertake this job!" he protested vehemently and went away.

When Lokanathan heard of this, he went to the zilla chief. "You entrust the work to me, and I shall manage to do it for you." He was readily given all powers



to see that the villagers evacuated the place soon. The villagers were aghast when they listened to Lokanathan's orders. "Like us, you too are a resident of this village. Yet you're not ashamed to ask us to leave this place? Where do we go?"

All their pleas fell on deaf ears, because Lokanathan sought the help of soldiers from the capital forcibly to evict them. However, he ensured that everybody was paid adequate compensation. But the villagers only cursed him as they packed up their belongings and moved out.

The zilla chief was very happy



that Lokanathan had succeeded in the work entrusted to him. He was complimented and praised publicly. He was made the village head and put in charge of the excavation there.

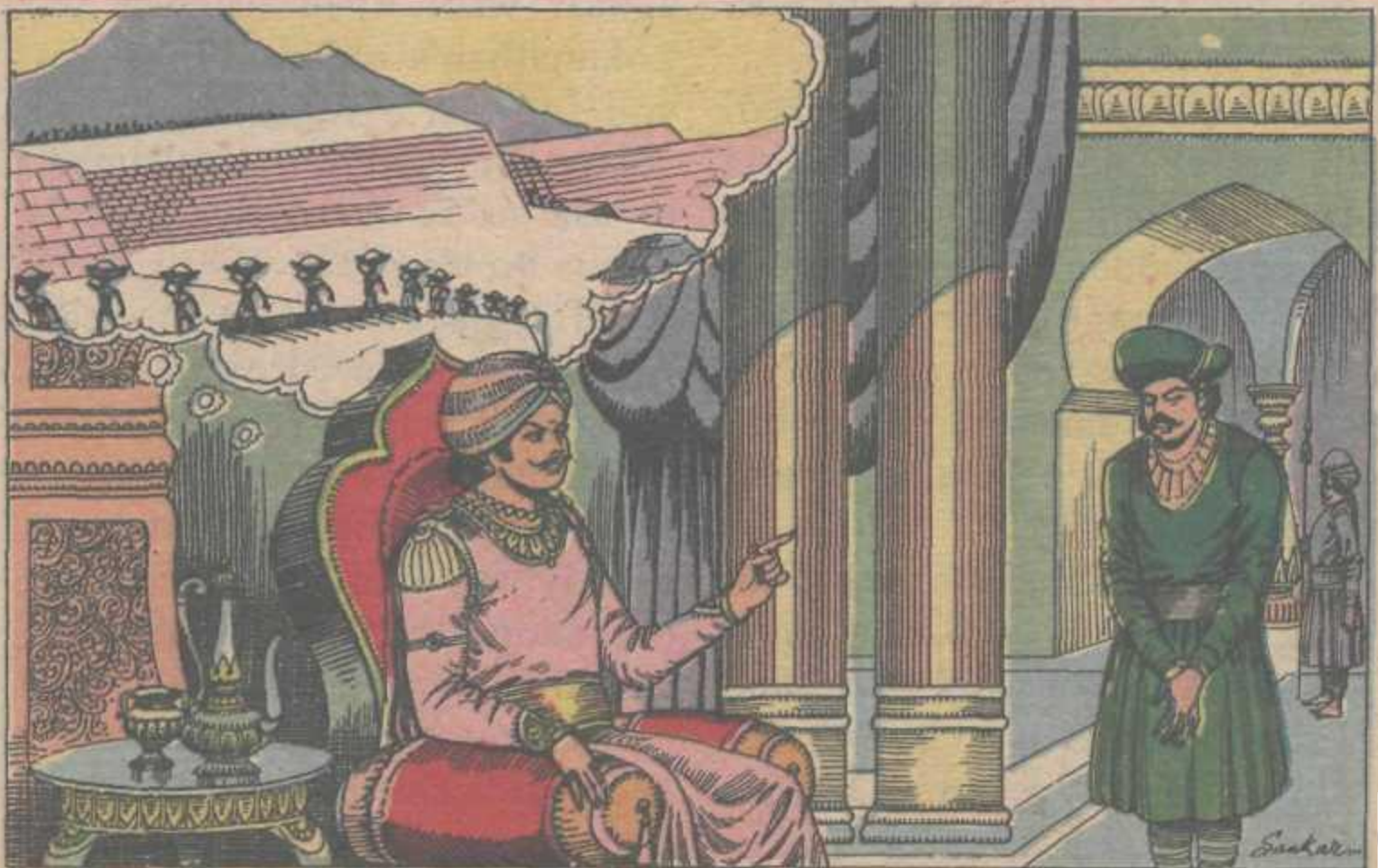
While the work progressed, the King of Videha wished to build a dam on the river flowing through Vinayapuri. Easily said than done, the king knew, because he might have to uproot several people from their abodes. Would they agree to a change of residence? he wondered. He called for the zilla chief and gave him the orders to rehabilitate the residents elsewhere.

Having once known the diffi-

culty of such an exercise, the zilla chief excused himself. "Sire, it's better that we don't undertake this project."

The king took this as an affront. He did not want anything to belittle his pride and so decided to carry out his proposal. Once again, Lokanathan came to know of the king's project and went to him. "Sire, if you so wish, I shall organise the evacuation of the villages."

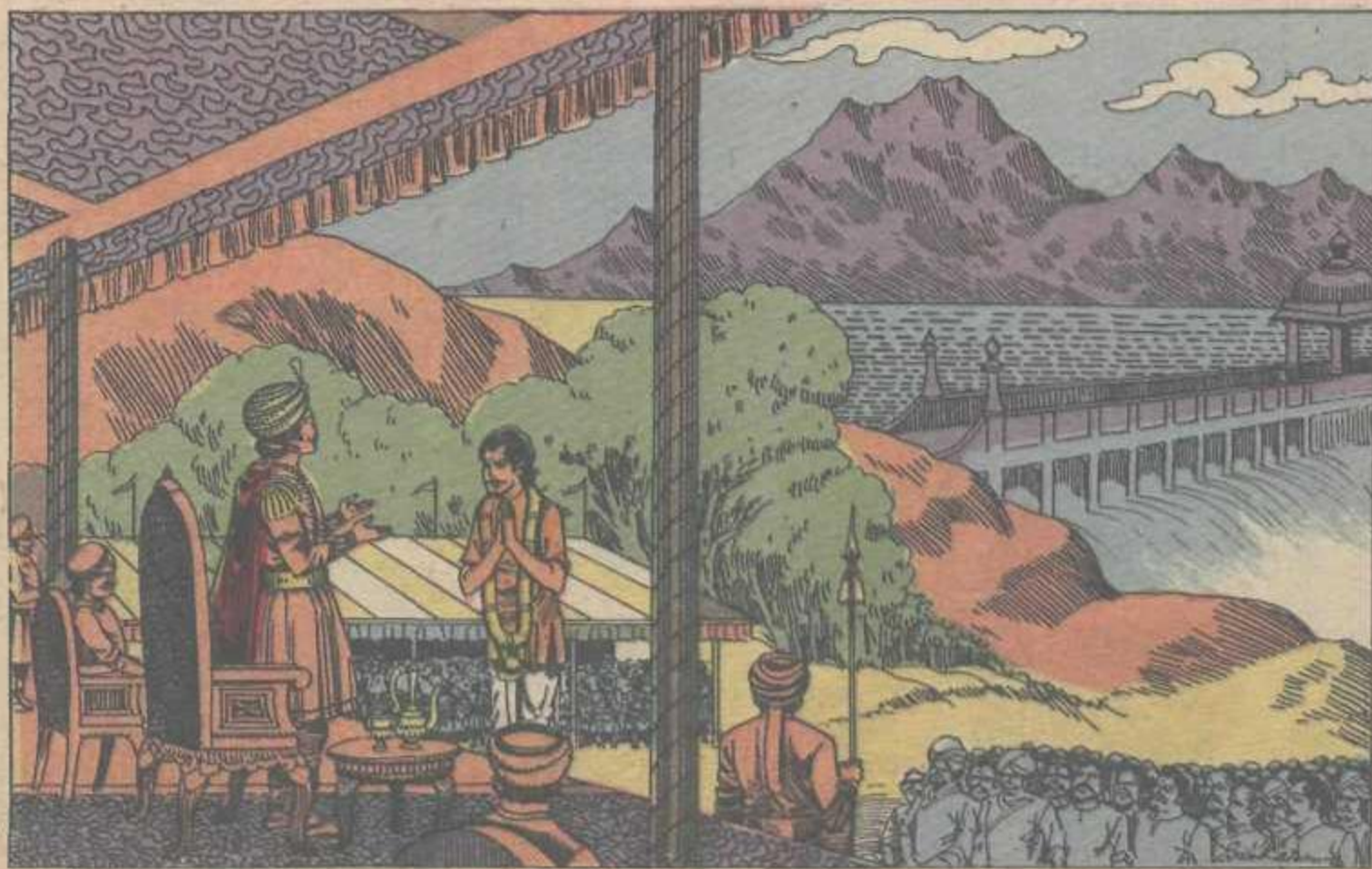
The king was overjoyed. He appointed Lokanathan as the zilla chief. Armed with authority, he ordered the villagers to leave their homes and hearths. They protested and held demonstra-



tions against him. Once again, he brought soldiers to enforce his orders. However, he paid compensation to each and every one of them. The villagers ridiculed him for having cheated them of their peace and happiness and accused him of a thirst for power and wealth. Lokanathan did not lend his ears to any of their uncomplimentary remarks as they left the place in an exodus. Why should he bother when the king himself had praised him as the people's benefactor?

The vampire concluded the story there and turned to Vikramaditya. "O king, how will you explain Lokanathan's attitude?

He gave up his own job for the sake of his son. Perhaps that can be justified. But his two subsequent acts—don't you think he wanted to earn a name and fame for himself? That he had a greed for power? As he was after these, he didn't bother about the people of his own village and their suffering, and evicted them in utter disregard of their pleas and protests, with the help of soldiers. And the king went to the extent of praising him as a friend of the people. Was that right and proper? Didn't he realise that Lokanathan was only being selfish? Mind you, if you fail to give me proper answers to these



questions, your head will be blown to pieces !”

King Vikramaditya, as usual, had ready answers. “No, it would be wrong to say, Lokanathan went after power and glory. That ore was a rare find and he knew that if excavated, it would improve the economy of the village, and ultimately would benefit the villagers. He argued that their fears were unfounded and their protests had no strength. They should have calmly thought of the advantages that would accrue to them. Similarly, much of the water in the river was going waste, and a dam would have irrigated vast tracts of land, resulting in a larger yield from the lands. True, a dam meant initial suffering to those displaced from their homes.

For that matter, any good deed

might affect some people, sometime, somewhere. But think of the benefit to several others. The king was aware of this and was, therefore, bent upon carrying out his project. The zilla chief was afraid of the people’s reaction, so he was removed from that post. Knowing fully well that the dam would, in the long run, benefit his people, the king decided to entrust the work to Lokanathan. And he himself bore the brunt of the people’s protests and brushed aside their curses, so as to carry out the king’s wishes. It was only proper for the king to have complimented him and expressed his gratitude.”

The vampire realised that Vikramaditya had outsmarted him, gave him the slip, and flew back to the ancient tree, taking the corpse along with him.



Of Nicknames



People in India are familiar with the name 'Cho' as that of a famous film star-turned-journalist and writer of Madras. But they might not recognise *CHO* as the Australian bowler, John Gleeson. That was the nickname he earned for mysteriously disappearing after the end of each day's game! The abbreviation stands for "Cricket Hours Only". Gleeson had once toured India under Bill Lawry. Speaking of nicknames, the famous Ranji was called "Smith" till His Highness Ranjitsinhji, the Jamsaheb of Nawanagar, scored a century before lunch in a Test match. He was then playing for England. Other popular nicknames are 'Gnome' (Fletcher) and 'Will' (Mike Denness).

Besides Tennis

John McEnroe, of tennis and tantrums fame, often insists on taking his family, wife and three children, to watch him play. Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario will have her puppy watching her mistress from the players' box. Africa-born Johan Kriek has a pig and a python as pets, but they have to be contented with waiting for him to return from his play. Jennifer Capriati sure misses her puppy whenever she goes for a tournament. Capriati and Gabriela Sabatini take time off to play backgammon. Players like Becker, Chang, and Wheaton nibble at bananas during matches, while the favourite with the fans at last Wimbledon was strawberries (23 tons were consumed). A majority of the women players keep dogs. But Martina Navratilova owns horses; one of them is named Grand Slam. Andre Agassi has a craze for cars; he has two Porsches and one Ferrari among his seven-strong *stable*!



John McEnroe

Navratilova

THE LIGHTER SIDE


MUTHAYYA AND HIS MASTER

Of course, for such work done, he would be paid a commission.

Muthuramalinga Thevar was a prosperous businessman who stayed in his farmhouse away from the city. He had agents working for him in several towns and he used to receive messages from them often. It was the duty of his clerk, Nagayya, to go to Deva Gownder's shop in the town, which was also the post office—if we may call it so—for the entire area, every day to enquire if there were any letters for Thevar.

One day, Nagayya did not go for work as he was ill. When he did not turn up even the next day, Thevar became anxious as he was expecting some message from one of his agents. So, he called his servant, Muthayya, and said, "Go to Gownder's shop in the town and find out if there's a letter for me."

Now, Muthayya was a nitwit.



This happened not long ago when no postal system as we know of today existed. People who expected letters would either go to the 'post offices' themselves or send someone to collect them on their behalf. They were also days when postage stamps had not been introduced. Addressees paid the required charges when they collected their letters. And, for that matter, there were no regular post offices, too. The authorities used to entrust the work of accepting and distributing letters to someone in the town—like a trader—to whom people went for their daily needs.

—CHANDAMAMA—

He did not understand why a shopkeeper should keep letters, besides groceries. He took a long time, walking the whole distance, and by the time he reached the shop, he was slightly impatient. He found two women waiting at the groceries section for the shopkeeper to attend to them, while Gownder himself was holding a pile of letters in one hand and reading out the addresses turning them one after another.

"I want a letter, sir, if you please!" Muthayya blurted out.

Deva Gownder looked up and asked, "Who do you want it for?"

Muthayya, who was expecting the shopkeeper to hand him one of the letters from the pile, did not very much relish that question. "How does that concern you, sir? The instructions given to me are to come here and fetch a letter. As simple as that!"

"I see!" Now Gownder became curious. "Who gave you such instructions?"

"My master," said Muthayya, authoritatively.

"And who, may I know, is your master?" asked Gownder, turning his attention again to the addresses on the letters.

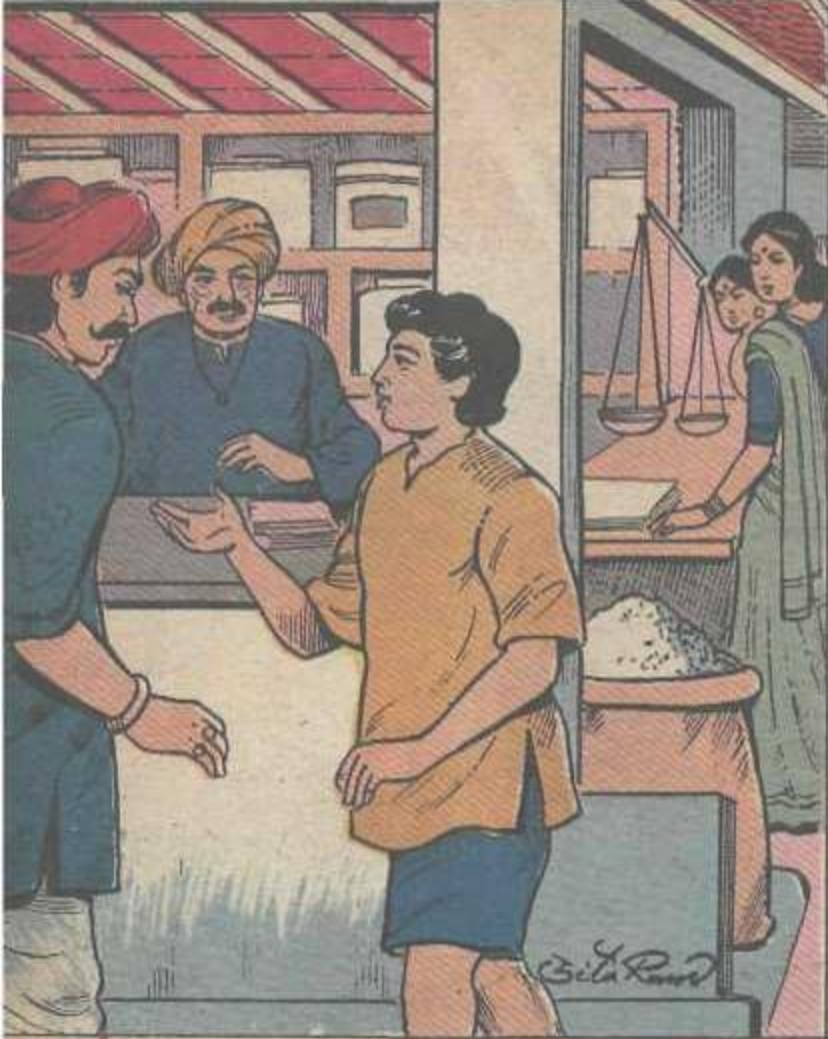


"Should you be concerned with that also, sir?" said Muthayya, still impatiently, but politely.

"Look here, you stupid fellow," said Gownder, taking time so as to make himself understood by the youngster, "unless you tell me his name, how can I give you a letter for him? Your master must be as great a fool as yourself to send you as his messenger."

Muthayya did not like the way the shopkeeper called his master a fool, though he did not realise that the man had paired him with his master. "It's all right that you





spoke of him only to me. If it reaches my master Muthuramalinga Thevar's ears, you would have had it from him! May god help you, sir!"

"So, you're Thevar's servant, aren't you?" Gownder exclaimed with some relief. "But I've never seen you before."

"You may not see me here again, if I've the option!" retorted Muthayya.

"I can't give you any letter for Thevar unless I know for certain that you're his servant. Is there anybody in the town who knows you?" Gownder prompted the

now bewildered Muthayya.

"Plenty!" said Muthayya, confidently. Before he could think of somebody, a gentleman who recognised Muthayya entered the shop.

"How's your master, Muthayya?" he asked the youth. "I haven't seen him for days. Please tell him that I enquired after him." Without waiting for an answer from the boy, he turned to the shopkeeper. "Have you a letter for me, Gownder?"

"Yes, sir," said Gownder, pulling out a long envelope from the pile before him. "That'll be half-a-rupee, sir."

The man paid him the coin and picking up the letter, left the shop.

"Here's a letter for your master," said Gownder, pulling out a smaller cover and placing it on the counter. "You've to pay me a rupee."

"That's unfair, sir," Muthayya reacted sharply. "Didn't I see you give a long one to Subbanna Mudaliar and ask for only half-rupee? You're asking for a whole rupee for this small one! Do you think I'm a fool!"

"I'm sure of it!" said Gownder



simply. Placing back the letter in the pile, he went up to where the women had been waiting for him. Muthayya watched him weigh and pack whatever the women asked for, and that took a long time. After they had left, Gownder went back to Muthayya. "I told you, you've to give me a rupee for the letter. You may go and tell your master."

By now Muthayya realised he would not get common justice for his master. Crestfallen, he left the shop and retraced his steps to the farmhouse, where Thevar was anxiously waiting for him. "So, there were no letters for me, isn't it?"

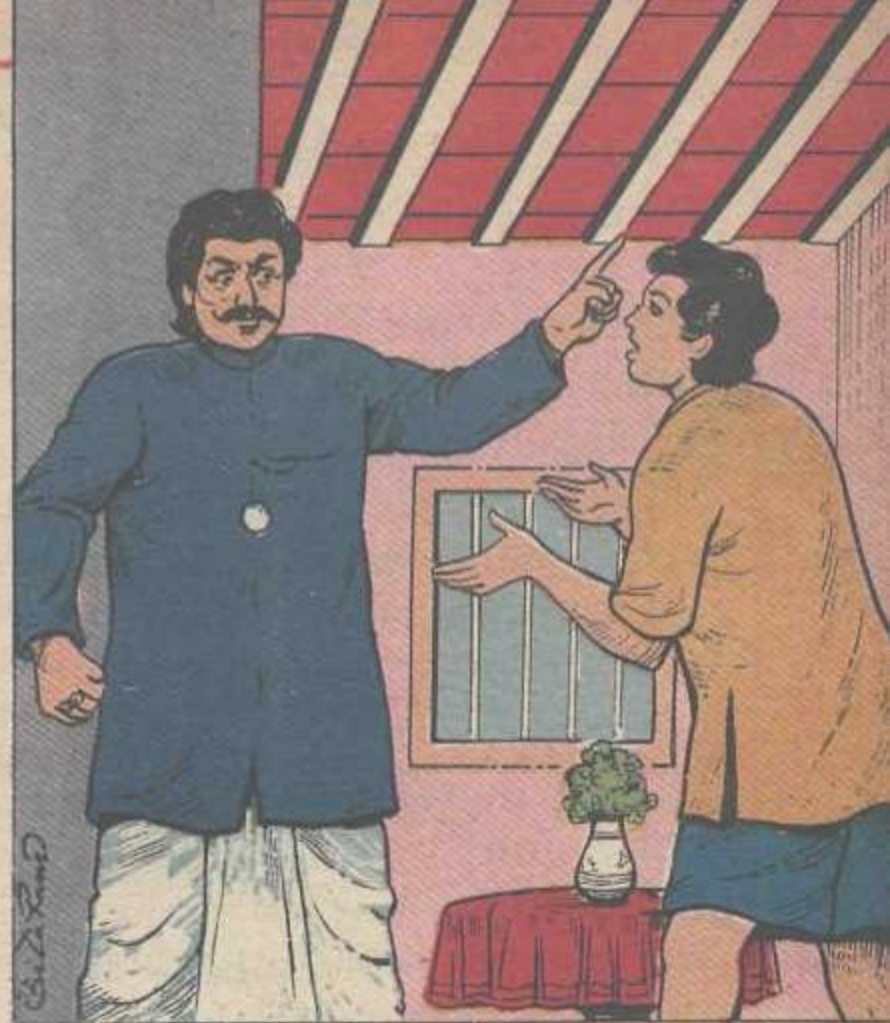
"There was one, sir," said Muthayya slowly, "but he wouldn't give it to me."

"Who wouldn't give it you, Muthayya?" Thevar sought a clarification.

"That man at the shop. He wants to charge double for it," explained Muthayya.

"Double? Maybe it has double weight. Anyway, why didn't you pay the amount and take the letter?" Thevar was now getting cross with him.

"Sir, how can I allow you to be



cheated? He gave a long one to Subbanna Mudaliar and took only half-a-rupee. And for a smaller envelope, he asks for a full rupee. Will you expect me to pay that much without consulting you?" explained Muthayya as best as he could.

"You fool!" Thevar was really furious. "Go back and fetch me that letter! And mind you, don't take another half-day to come back. I'll murder you!"

Just as instructed, Muthayya ran non-stop to the town and entered Gownder's shop-cum-post office breathless. "I've come



for that letter!"

"Can't you see I'm attending to others?" Gownder rebuked him.

"But my master is in a hurry!" Muthayya sounded as if he, too, was equally in a hurry.

"Let him wait till his hurry is over," said Gownder, still busy packing things and counting the money given to him by a customer.

"He'll murder me if I'm not back soon!" said Muthayya pleadingly.

"I'm happy to hear that!" said Gownder provokingly, now enjoying his conversation with the youth.

Muthayya suddenly noticed the pile of letters on the counter. He waited for the shopkeeper to turn his back and go near the shelves when he picked two

letters and stuffed them into his trouser pocket.

The last customer having left the shop, Gownder now came to the counter, collected a rupee from Muthayya, and handed him the letter for Thevar. He did not see the mischievous smile on Muthayya's face as he ran out of the shop.

On reaching home, he placed all the three letters in front of his master. "There! I've brought enough for your money's worth!"

Muthuramalinga Thevar ran his eyes over the addresses on the envelopes, and held up two of them for Muthayya to see. "But these two are not mine!" shouted his horrified master.

"They're yours **now**, sir," said Muthayya unruffled. "you've paid for them."



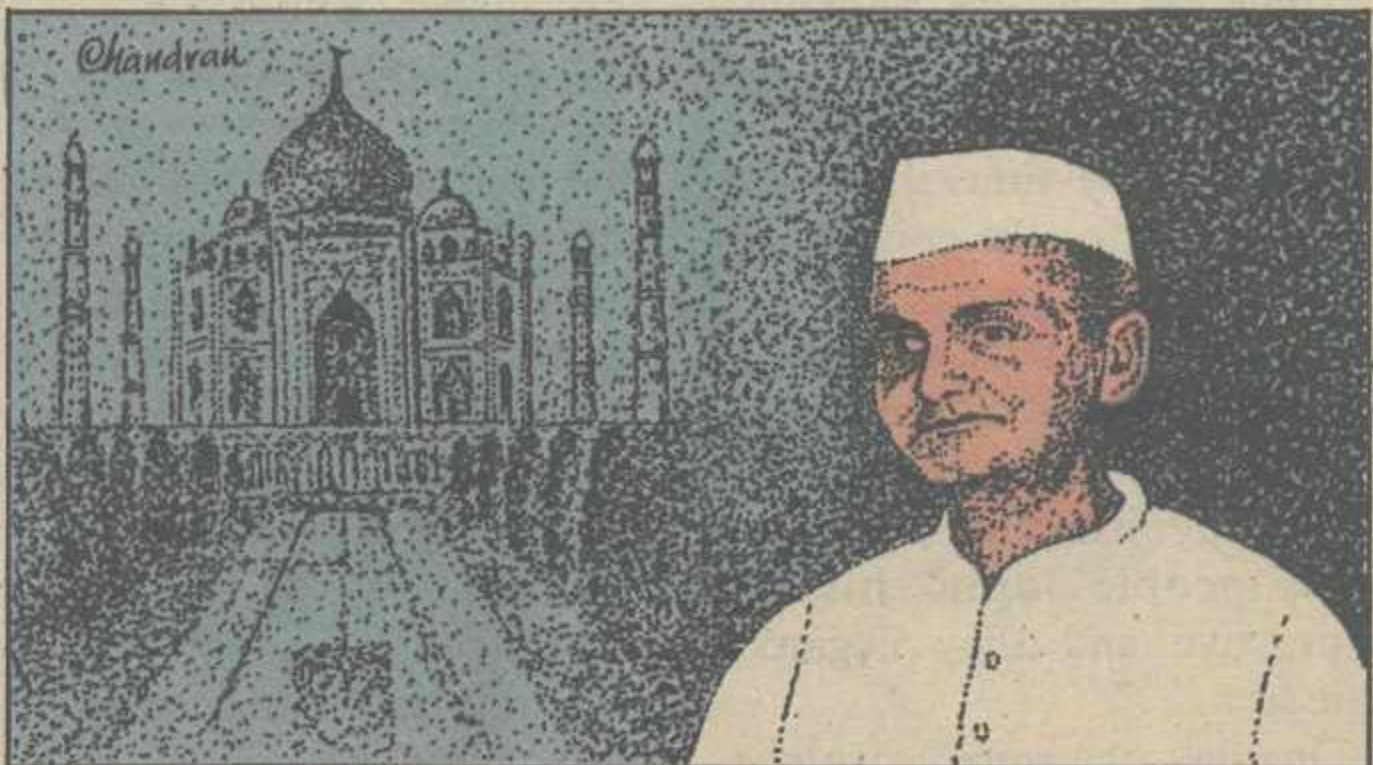
The Beauty of Foundation-stones

In 1965, India faced an armed conflict with Pakistan. Fortunately, the war did not last long and peace was restored at the instance of nations friendly to both countries. One of them was the Soviet Union, which took the initiative to convene a meeting in Tashkent in January 1966, when a peace treaty was signed. On behalf of India, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri signed the accord. That very night, he passed away following a heart attack.

It is said of Lal Bahadur Shastri that, as a boy, he used to wade through a river every day to reach his school. After completing his education, he did not seek any employment, but was attracted to the Servants of India Society and engaged himself in serving the people. A dedicated volunteer, he saw to it that whenever newspapers wrote about the Society and the social work it was doing, they avoided mentioning his name.

One day, another volunteer became curious and asked him why he shunned publicity. To which he replied, "Friend, I still remember what Lala Lajpat Rai had told me when he introduced me to the Society. He said, two kinds of stones were used for building the Taj Mahal—one, the marble above the platform, which is seen and admired by everyone. The other, the foundation-stones, which nobody can see and admire. I wish to be like those foundation-stones."

How many can emulate Lal Bahadur Shastri?





A Royal Lesson

Mahendravarman once ruled over Mangalapuri. His subjects praised him as a virtuous king, especially because of his generosity. The trouble was, he did not distinguish between bad and good advice and accepted whatever was offered to him. This was perhaps his only weakness.

Some people took advantage of this weakness. They succeeded in securing from him all that they wanted. Every time this would not be good for the country and as a result, the people suffered. For example, at the instance of the affluent, he would punish the innocent, while the real culprits escaped punishment. In course of time, people found his rule oppressive and they began to hate him.

One day, the royal astrologer,

Atmaraman, was passing by the king's chambers. He saw a villager carrying a jack fruit. He stopped him. "I see you're carrying a jack fruit. It smells good and the fruit must be really ripe. Where are you taking it?"

"This is the first jack fruit that grew in my garden, and I'm going to offer it to our king," replied the villager, who did not recognise the gentleman as the royal astrologer.

Atmaraman in a loud voice said, "Do you know why I stopped you and engaged you in conversation? I had a good look at your face and I find signs of royal qualities. I won't be surprised if you become king here one day."

Mahendravarman, who was watching the whole incident from his balcony, was also listening to



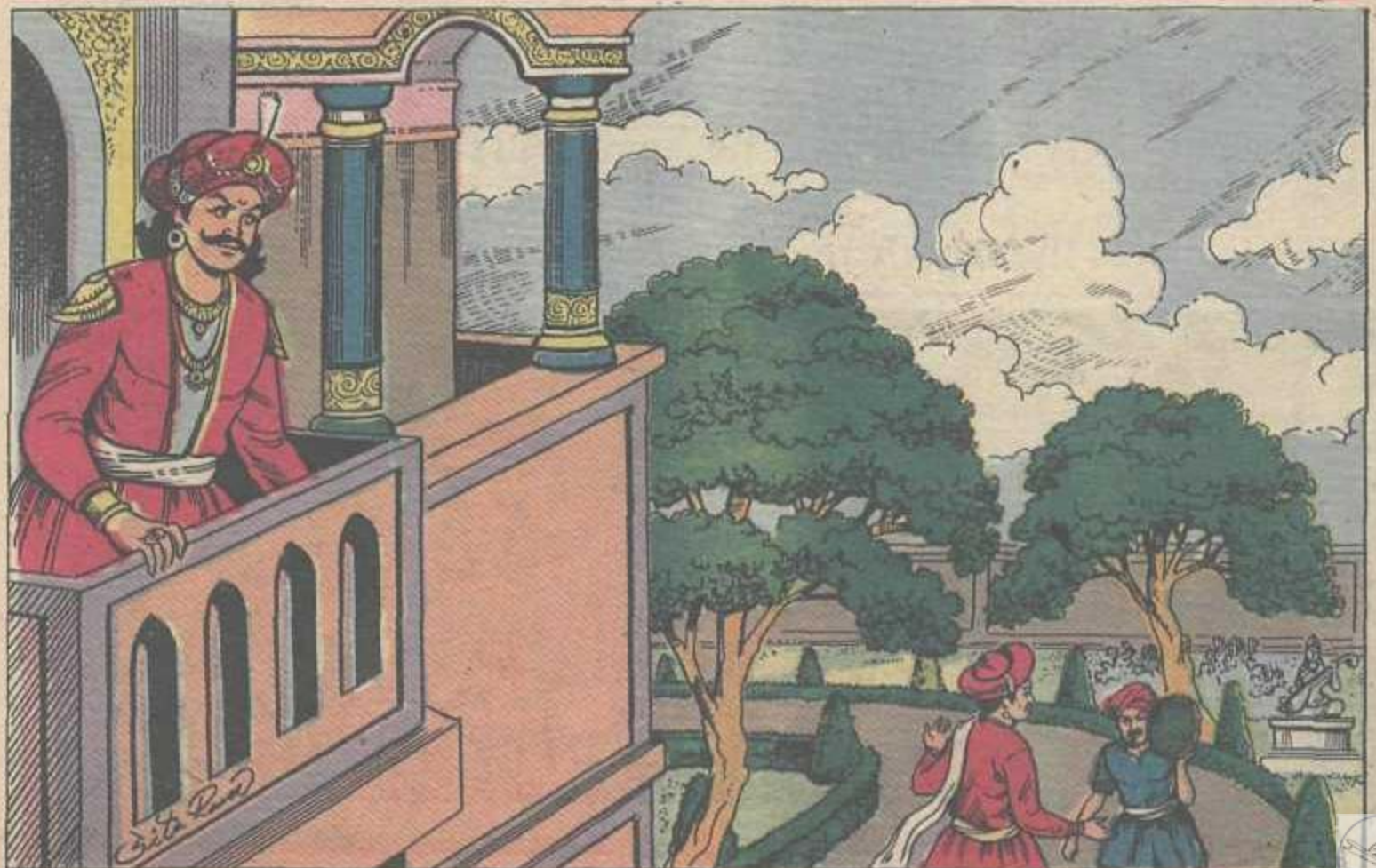
the conversation. He wondered why the royal astrologer had made such a prediction, and why Atmaraman had not warned him that someone else might take his place as king.

Meanwhile, the villager was very happy that he had chances of becoming a king. Who would not like to sit on the throne given a chance? "You mean to say that I've royal qualities?" he asked Atmaraman unbelievably. "Could you tell me how I have acquired such qualities?"

"Of course, I can explain the reasons to you," said Atmaraman, "but why should I bother if I am not going to benefit?"

The villager suspected that the gentleman was perhaps expecting a reward. Otherwise, why should he come out with excuses and evade giving him an answer? But, then, it was only just that the man was rewarded. "You're right, sir. Who would make predictions like that without some remuneration or reward? I'm a poor villager, and right now the only valuable item in my possession is this jack fruit. I shall certainly give it to you. Please accept it and tell me the reasons why I would be king."

"Fine, but do you have any idea who I am?" prodded Atmaraman.



To which the villager pleaded ignorance. "I'm so sorry, I don't know you. I don't think I've met you earlier."

"Ah! That's the point," remarked Atmaraman. "Till now you didn't know who I am. Yet you had no hesitation in believing all that I said after meeting you so casually in the street. You were also willing to believe that a poor villager could become a king and were ready to give me the jack fruit which you were going to present to the king. I know what kind of a fool you are. I am yet to come across another simpleton who would believe anybody and everybody. If this country will have a fool and a simpleton as its king, you, too, can become its king. Why don't you make a try? Maybe you'll succeed!"

The villager thought there was

a lot of sense in what the gentleman had just said. "You're very right. When you told me I've royal qualities, I did not want to think beyond that, and I forgot everything else. I believed in you even without finding out who you are. I was also willing to part with the jack fruit, though I was taking it to the king. How can a fool like me become king? No, in future I'll only wish for what I really deserve. I shall carry out my original desire and take this fruit to the king."

Mahendravarman listened to the entire conversation and realised that Atmaraman had really meant it as a lesson for him. That is why he had raised his voice when he talked to the villager, so that the king would hear all that he wanted to say. From that day, the king became discreet in accepting the views of others.

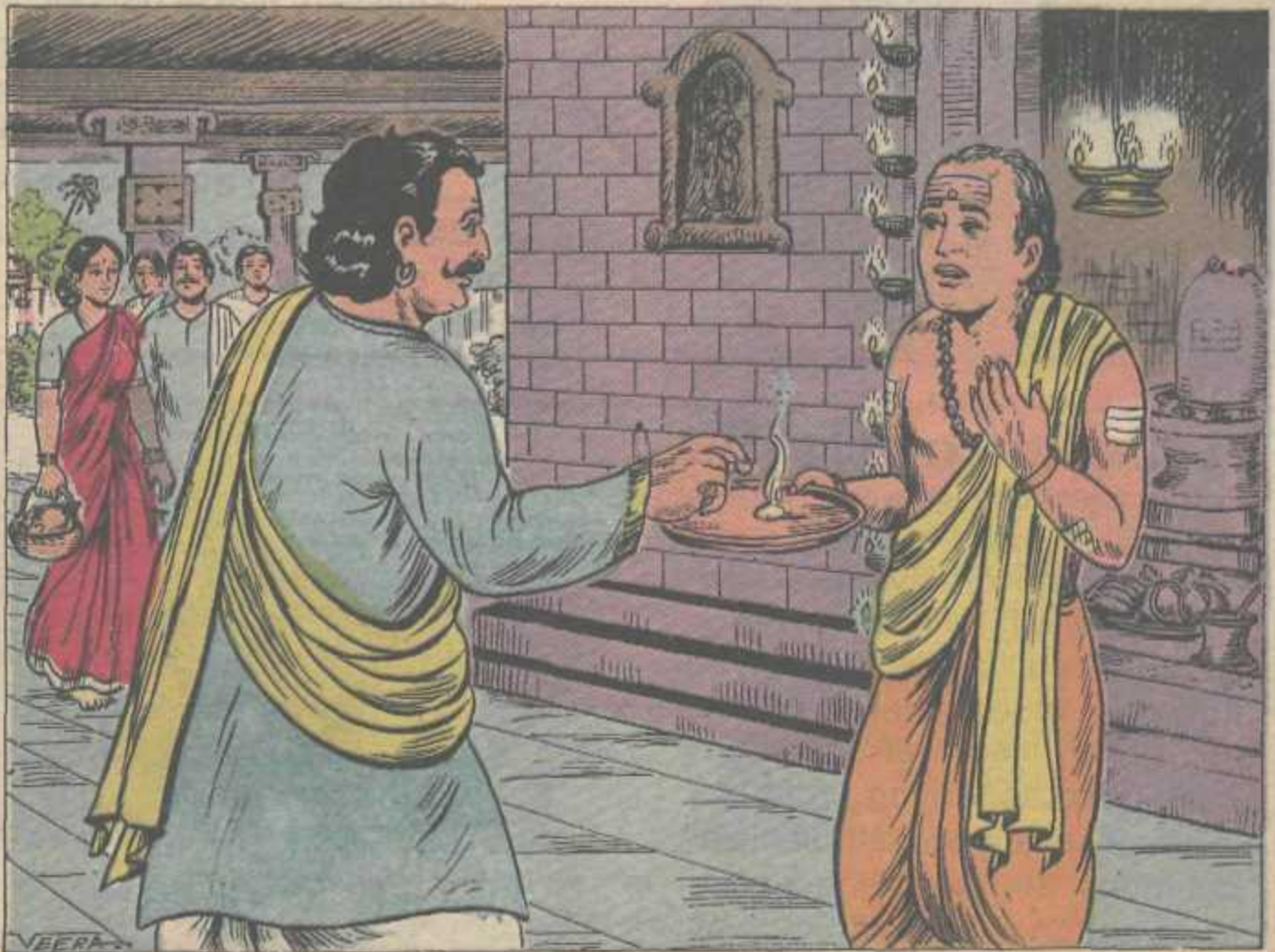


WHY ADD TO THE INSULT?

Jagaveera was a zamindar, who possessed a lot of wealth. However, he was a miser. He posed himself as a very pious man and would not fail to visit the temple every morning. But he would never buy a coconut for his puja or offer a coin to the pujari whenever he took the *arati* to him, though Jagaveera would pay his respect to it. The pujari, Ayyasami, never felt anything bad about it and continued to take the *arati* to him after he did the puja for the zamindar.

The Sivaratri special puja was on. Jagaveera was right in the front among the worshippers. When the pujari took the *arati* to them as usual, the zamindar placed a ten paise coin on the tray. The pujari was surprised. "Sir, you're the first one to make an offering today, but a mere ten paise is an insult. How about another ten paise?"

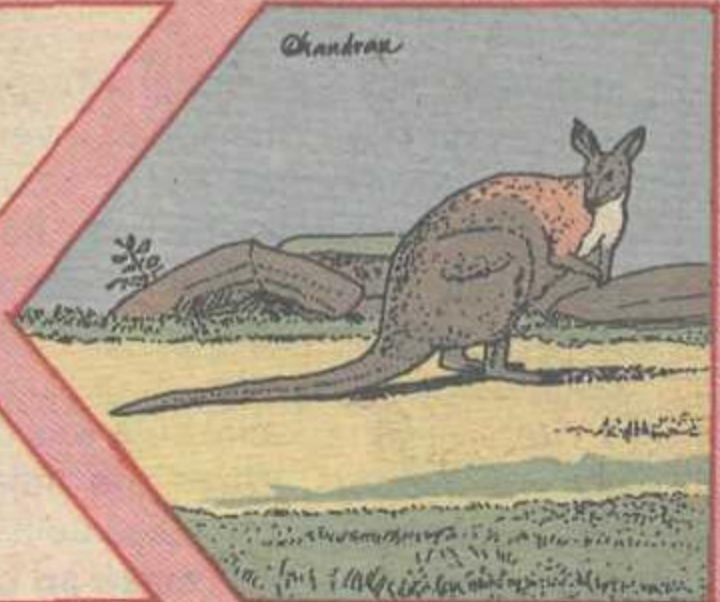
"If you consider this ten paise to be an insult, I won't add to it by giving you ten paise more," said Jagaveera and promptly picked the coin from the tray and left the temple.



WORLD OF NATURE

Kangaroo Tail

Kangaroo, the marsupial mammal found in Australia, does not walk or run; it hops! The larger animal can jump upto 30ft (9m) at one stretch. It can jump only if its tail is *not* lifted off the ground. It is the tail (3.5 ft long) that gives it a push to make the jump.

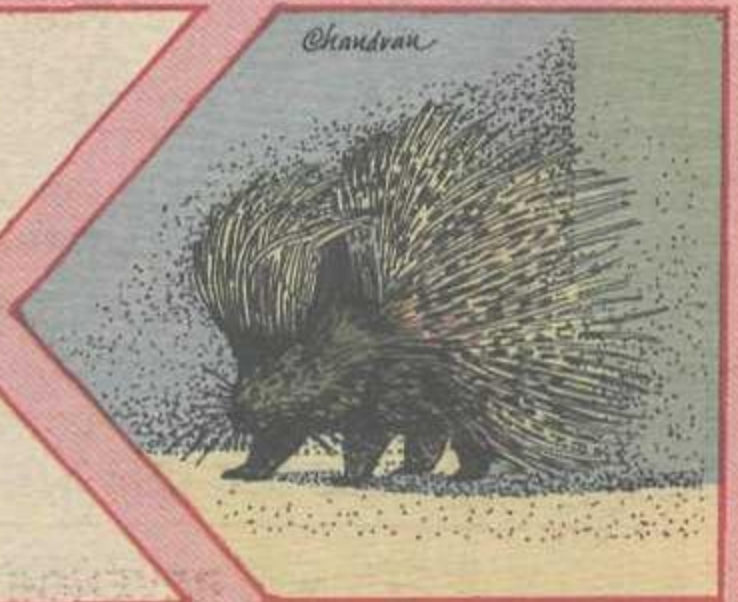


Walkie-talkie?

Elephants normally travel in herds which have their own sentries. At the very hint of danger, the sentry raises its trunk. The rest of the herd may be as far as half-a-mile away. Still they are immediately warned. Man is yet to find out how the message is actually conveyed!

A Count of Quills

Porcupines are rodents with sharp black-and-white quills on their brown body. An average-size porcupine will have as many as 30,000 quills, which are hollow. In olden times, the quills filled with ink were used as writing implements. The hollow quills serve as pontoons and help the animal to swim and to remain afloat.





VEER HANUMAN

16

(Ravana is curious to know all about the mighty monkey who has annihilated every one of the soldiers and commanders whom he had sent to capture him. Hanuman discloses his mission and advises Ravana to return Sita to Rama and seek his pardon. Enraged, Ravana orders him to be killed. Vibhishana cautions him, saying Hanuman is only an emissary. Ravana is keen on punishing him and orders his tail to be set fire to. Hanuman, in turn, sets houses and mansions aflame. In no time, the city lies in a heap of ash. Hanuman assures himself that Sita is safe before he bids farewell to her and flies back to Kishkindhya.)

All the questions Ravana wanted to ask Hanuman were put to him by the commander-in-chief, Prahastha. And he revealed his mission: "My name is Hanuman. I'm an emissary of the Vanara king, Sugriva. I came here to search for Sita, the wife of Rama. You kidnapped her and had kept her

in the Asoka garden here. I tried my best to meet you and talk to you, but to no avail. I destroyed your gardens only to bring me to you. Whoever had attempted to kill me, was killed in self-defence. I'm blessed with a boon from Lord Brahma that no arrow will be capable of taking my life. That's why, when the demons

REVENGE ON LANKA





sent the Brahmastra against me, I showed my respect to it and allowed myself to be captured, so that I would have an opportunity to meet you.”

Hanuman did not stop with that. He wanted to tease Ravana. “You know Bali, don’t you? Remember he once called you a ten-headed insect and tied you like a toy to his son Angada’s cradle? Would you know that Rama could kill that dare-devil with just one single arrow? He then made Sugriva the King of Kishkindhya. As a gesture of gratitude to Rama, he sent his people in all directions in search

of Sitadevi. I’m one of them. On his behalf, I shall give you some advice for your own benefit. Listen to me carefully.”

Hanuman continued thus: “You’re well-versed in all the scriptures. Yet, you didn’t realise that you were doing something wrong when you kidnapped a married woman. Sreerama is a great warrior. Anybody opposing him will not be able escape his wrath. He’ll be able to annihilate every one of you in no time. Whoever had kidnapped Sitadevi will meet with his doom at the hands of Rama. From the moment you made Sita your prisoner, you’ve been moving closer to your end.”

Hanuman was all the while watching Ravana shifting in his seat. He now threatened the demon king with dire consequences. “Just look at me. I’m neither a human being, nor a demon. I’m, therefore, able to view things impartially. You can still save yourself, by freeing Sitadevi, returning her to Rama, and seeking his forgiveness. However, if your motive is something else, be certain to die at the hands of Sreerama.”

By now Ravana’s anger knew



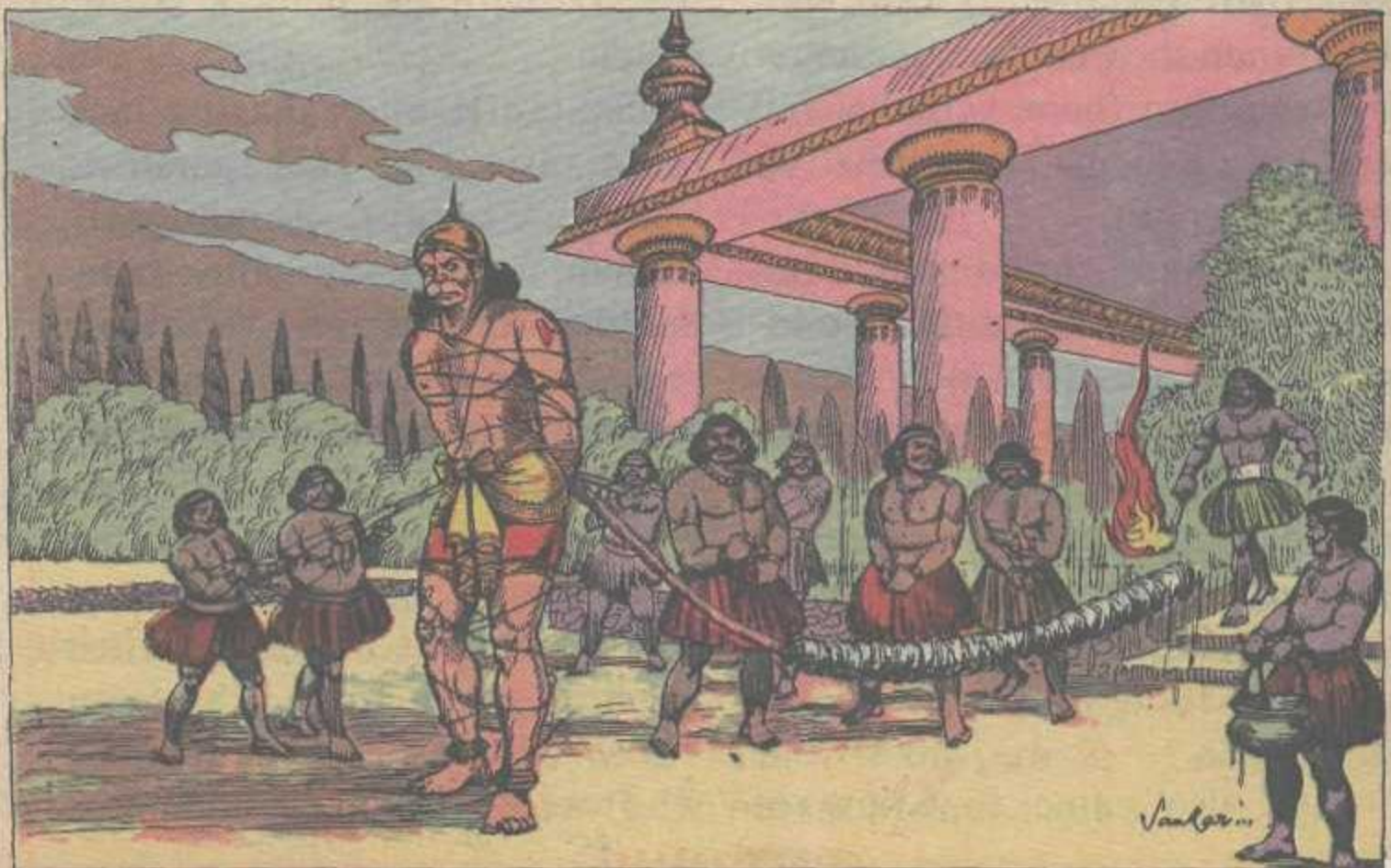
no bounds and he cried aloud, "Let somebody kill this wretched monkey!"

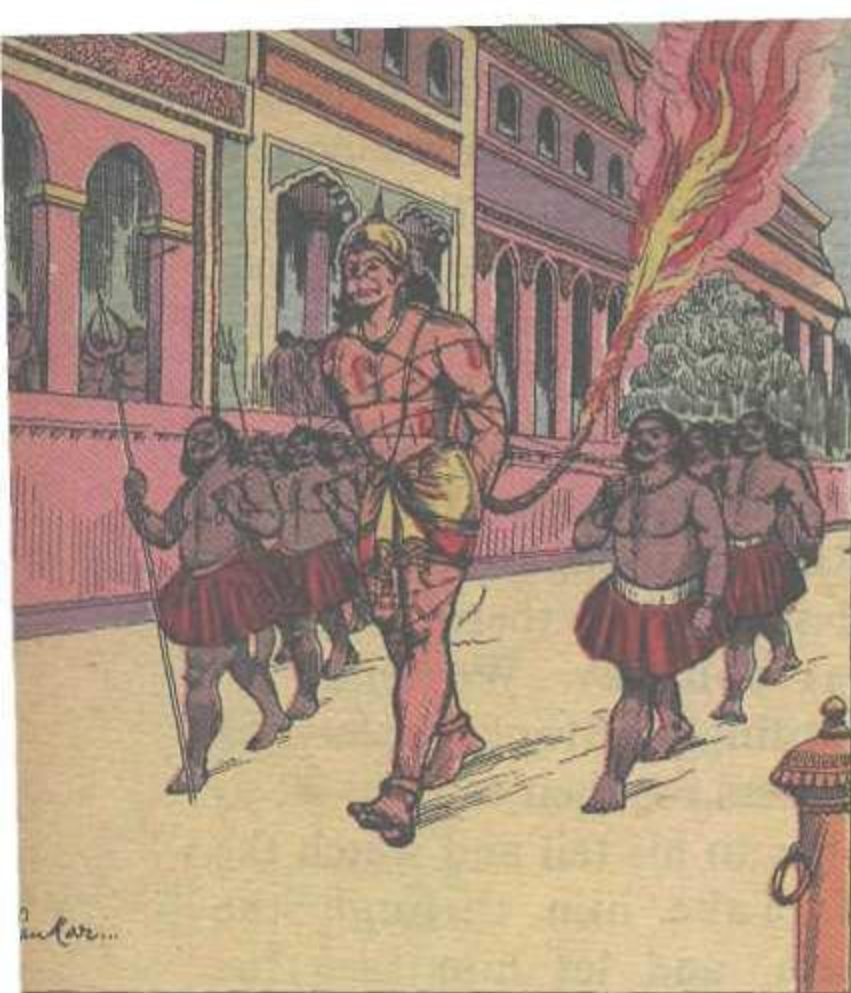
There was silence for some time, everybody wanting to know whether anybody would dare carry out Ravana's orders. The wisest among them, Vibhishana, who was also Ravana's brother, stood up and spoke: "O king of Lanka! This monkey has come as an emissary of a king, and it will be against the code of conduct to kill him. If you're so keen to punish him, then give him some suitable punishment. You may mutilate him, or whip him, or shave him bald. However, I personally feel you should not

turn your anger on him. After all, he was sent here by someone and he had only given us the message that he carried. If we were to send him back with our message, then those people will come to fight us. We can defeat them and show them our power and strength."

Ravana thought for a while and said, "Yes, there's sense in what you say. We shall do accordingly. Monkeys have a weakness for their tail. So let us set fire to his tail and watch the fun. Take him through the streets, and let him face the ridicule of the people. He'll then learn a lesson."

The demons then set about





wrapping half of Hanuman's tail with cloth. They poured oil on it and then set fire to one end. Hanuman showed them his anger by whipping them with his tail and killing them. The tail had so much strength.

Word went round and demons, demonesses, and their children rushed out to watch Hanuman's tail on fire. Some demons came and tied him all over and led him through the streets. Hanuman swung his tail all around, setting fire to the houses and mansions on either side of the streets.

Sita also came to know of

Hanuman's tail being set on fire. She was sad that someone who had come to her rescue had to face such a fate. One of the demonesses called Sarama comforted her. "Don't worry, Devi. Hanuman is no ordinary monkey. Right now he has already freed himself and is leaping and jumping all over the place setting fire to everything that came his way. The entire city is ablaze."

Hanuman did not spare a single house or mansion along the streets that he walked now. It looked as though the God of Fire and the God of Wind had joined him in his task, for, the fire spread all over and rose high in the sky with the help of strong winds.

The castle of Prahastha, and the mansions of Mahaparshwa, Sudha, Indrajit, Jambumali, Sumali, and many other commanders and warriors were soon reduced to ashes. Hanuman spared the mansion where Vibhishana stayed. All other buildings, with the valuables and precious items inside, in no time disappeared without a trace of their former glory and grandeur. Those demons and demonesses who were caught inside were

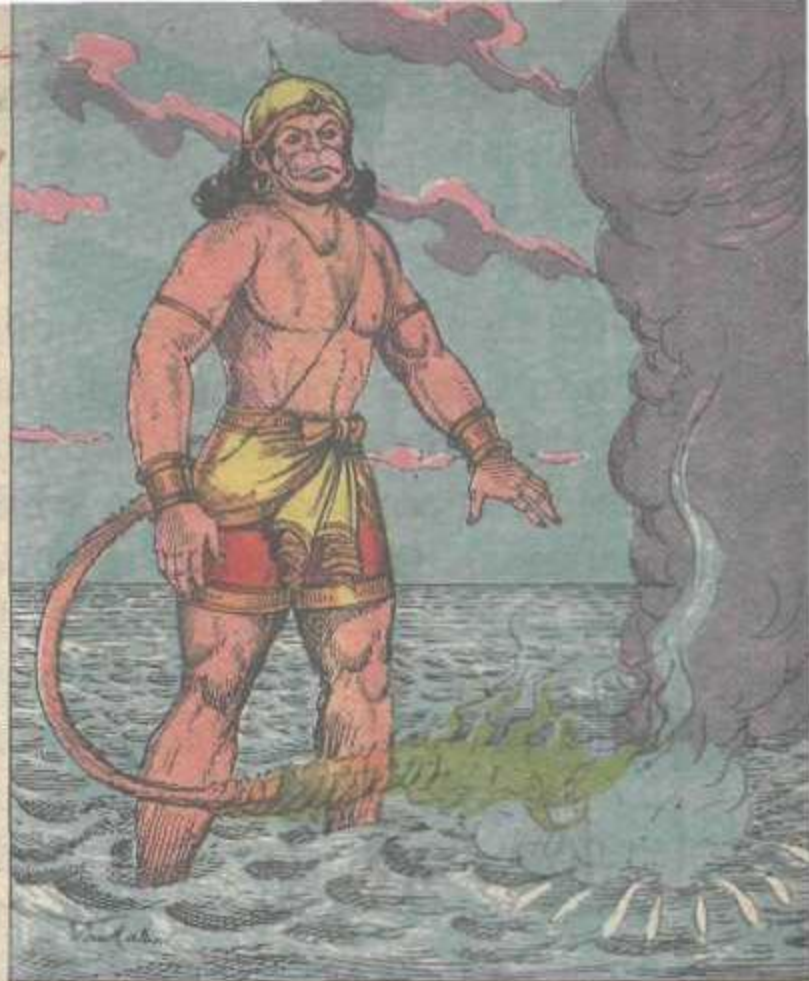


burnt to death. The city of Lanka was one huge heap of ash. What was left were cries of death and moans of the suffering.

At last, Hanuman's anger seemed to have subsided. Lankapuri, which was once blindingly glittering, lay in ruins, and he was satisfied. He was not sorry that he had to kill so many demons and destroy the city. He had had his revenge and was, therefore, happy. He went up to the ocean and put out the fire on his tail, which had not suffered any harm or injury from burns.

By now, he was overtaken by misgivings. Was his deed right and just? He began wondering whether Sitadevi herself had to come to any danger when the city went up in flames. He doubted whether he had indulged in a senseless act, and cursed himself. He decided to put an end to his life if Sita had come to any harm. He was, however, certain that the God of Fire, who had protected his tail, would also have taken care of Sitadevi.

He moved towards where he had found Sita. He saw her alone beneath the Simsipa tree where he had met her. He felt comforted that she had not been harmed.



With folded hands, he asked her, "Mother, I hope you've not been harmed."

"O Hanuman! You've proved your courage and prowess," Sita praised him. "You alone are capable of destroying these demons and rescuing me. But it'll be only proper if my husband came here to take me away. Please tell him so, and both of you should come here as quick as possible."

"Please don't be anxious on any count," Hanuman reassured Sita. "My lord, Rama, will come here to take you back to Ayodhya. I shall go and convey to him all that you've told me. And we



both shall come back here soon.” Hanuman then bade farewell to her and started on his return journey.

He climbed the highest mountain in Lanka and leapt high into the skies. Because of his strength, the mountain shook for a while. Hanuman flew through the clouds and soon saw at a distance the Mahendru mountains. He gave out a jubilant roar. This was heard by Angada and other Vanara leaders who were anxiously awaiting Hanuman’s return from his mission. They immediately let out a joyous cry of victory.

“Hanuman seems to have achieved his mission,” remarked Jambavan, “that’s why he’s announcing his success this way.” The Vanaras were now quite eager to watch his arrival. They climbed the trees and peaks that were around, wanting to catch an early glimpse of him. And the moment they saw him, they swung the tree tops in wild ecstasy.

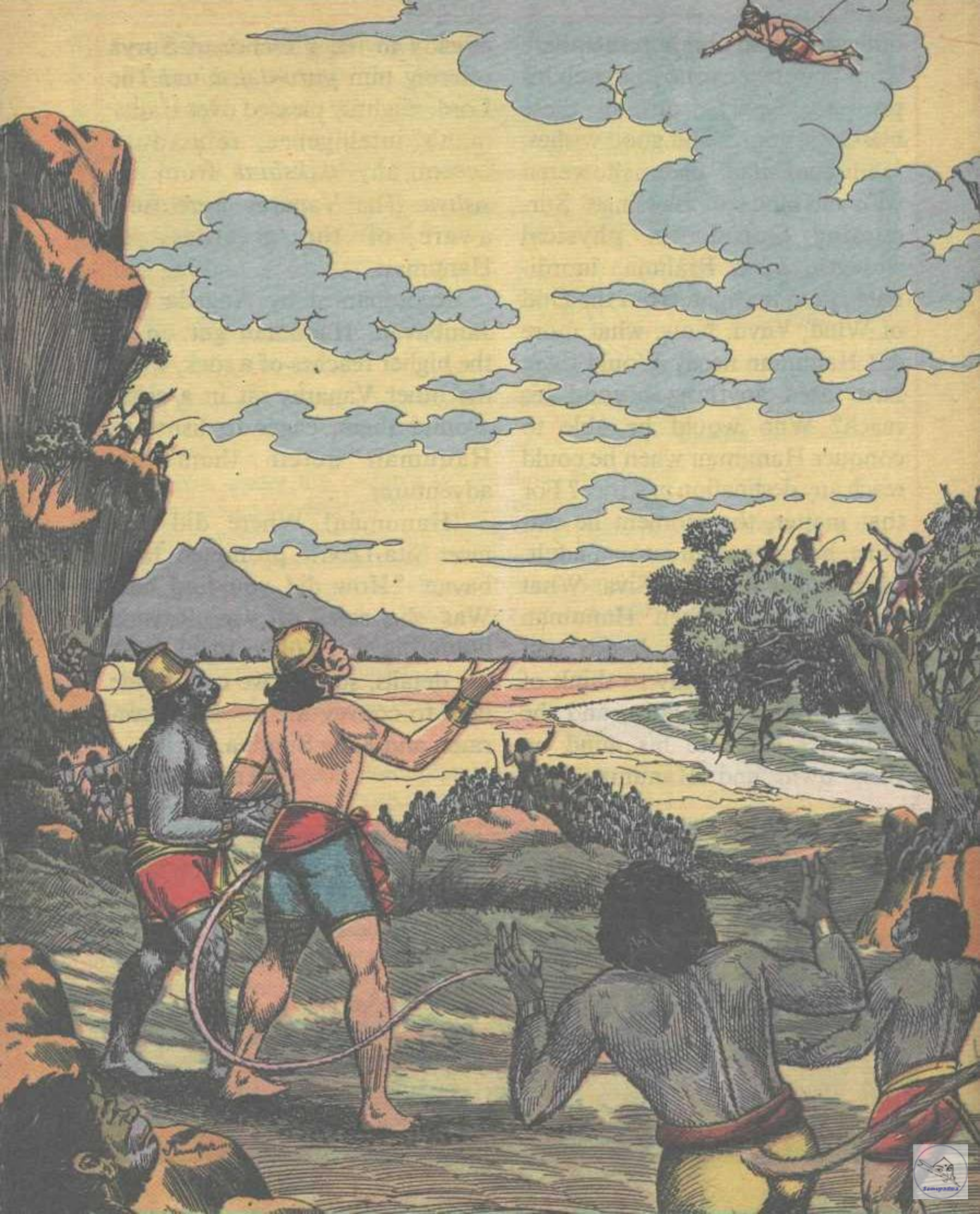
Hanuman descended on Mahendru. The Vanaras rushed to him and encircled him. Some of them offered him fruits. He bowed to Angada and Jambavan and announced, “I saw Sita Devi!”

They all heaved a great sigh of

relief. They sang and danced and jumped to express and exhibit their joy. Strangely, Hanuman had fallen into silence. The Vanaras waited with bated breath to hear the details of his achievement. “Hanuman! You traversed the vast ocean to achieve nothing less than a miracle. Nobody else would have succeeded like you have. Should I say anything more in evidence of your loyalty to our king? It’s our fortune that you could meet Sitadevi. Now, there won’t be another occasion for her to be separated from Rama. Let’s hope there will be a reunion very soon.”

The Vanaras were aware of the inborn miraculous prowess of Hanuman. After all, he was a phenomenon even at birth. Lord Brahma had blessed him with life as long as life existed on earth. Lord Vishnu’s blessings made him the greatest devotee on earth, while Lord Siva had wished him to become the mightiest of the mighty. Lord Indra gave him the boon that no arrow would harm his body. Agni, the God of Fire, ordained that he would not be affected by fire. The God of Death, Kalan, had assured him that he need not be afraid of death. The





other gods had told him that there would not be anyone to match his prowess. Apart from all these blessings, boons, and good wishes, Hanuman had been showered with all kinds of blessings. Surpassing Garuda in physical strength, from Brahma; inordinate speed in flight, from the God of Wind, Vayu. Now, what more did Hanuman need? Would there have been anything beyond his reach? Who would be able to conquer Hanuman when he could reach any destination in a trice? For that matter, the moment he was born, he had grown into an adult, as ordained by Lord Siva. What had happened when Hanuman wished to learn the Vedas and Sastras? He had only to think of Lord Surya as his guru, and the scriptures came to his mind on their own, and Hanuman was

already in the presence of Surya offering him *guru-dakshina*! The Lord, mightily pleased over Hanuman's intelligence, refused to accept any *dakshina* from his *sishya*. The Vanaras were fully aware of the greatness of Hanuman.

Accompanied by Angada and Jambavan, Hanuman got on to the higher reaches of a rock, while the other Vanaras sat in a circle around them, eager to listen to Hanuman retell them his adventures.

"Hanuman! Where did you meet Sita Devi?" prompted Jambavan. "How did you find her? Was she safe, or was Ravana bothering her? You've to tell us all the details, so that we can decide how to convey the news to Sreerama and King Sugriva."

(To continue)





When did South Vietnam and North Vietnam become one?

—Pawan Dalmia, Sambalpur

In 1954, under the Geneva Convention, the former French colony of Indochina was divided into North and South Vietnam. When the communist Vietcong within South Vietnam attempted to seize power with the help of North Vietnam and China, the U.S.A. provided support to South Vietnam and war started between the two states. This war raged for 10 long years and a peace treaty was signed in 1973. However, two years later, North Vietnam invaded South Vietnam and annexed it in 1976. Since then, it is known as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Who was the first historian in the world?

—Jyotiranjana Biswal, Durgapur

The Greek historian, Herodotus (484-424 B.C) wrote the history of the defeat of the two Persian invasions of Greece in 490 B.C. and 480 B.C. He was the first historian to attempt a critical evaluation of events.

What is the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle?

—R. Prasad, Raichur

Bermuda (capital, Hamilton) is a group of islands in north-west Atlantic. It is a self-governing British colony. On December 2, 1945, five U.S. Navy aircraft suddenly disappeared without a trace as they flew over the region. A rescue plane that went in search of them also disappeared as mysteriously as the earlier ones. Subsequently, several aircraft and naval craft, which went into that area, have been missing. Their loss has remained unexplained till today. The loss has also been pinpointed to an area now called the Bermuda Triangle, which has given birth to a phrase in the English language to refer to any unexplained mystery.

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

Nature never deceives us; it is always we who deceive ourselves.

—Rousseau

In great attempts, it is glorious even to fail.



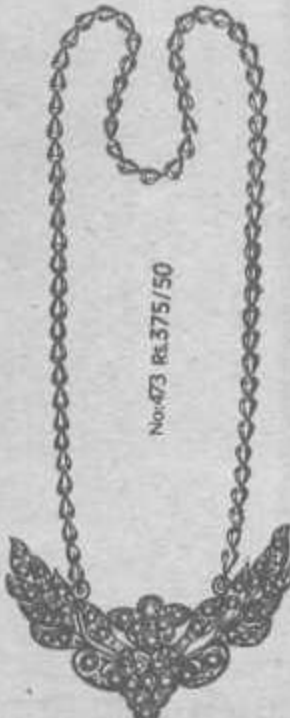


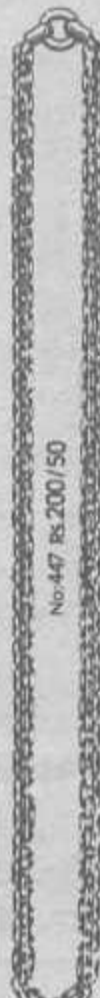
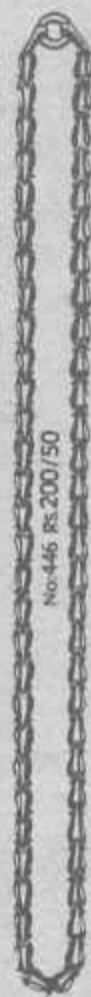
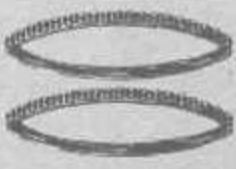



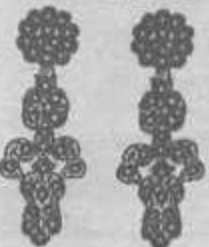

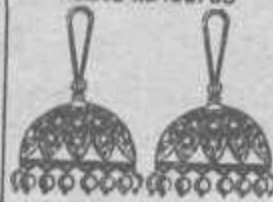





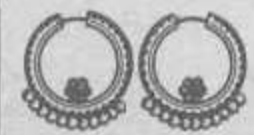



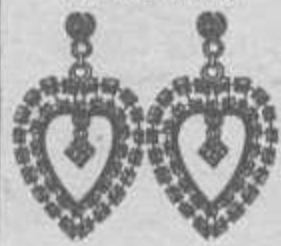



—Longinus

Flattery is like a bad coin; it impoverishes those who receive it.

—Madame Woillez

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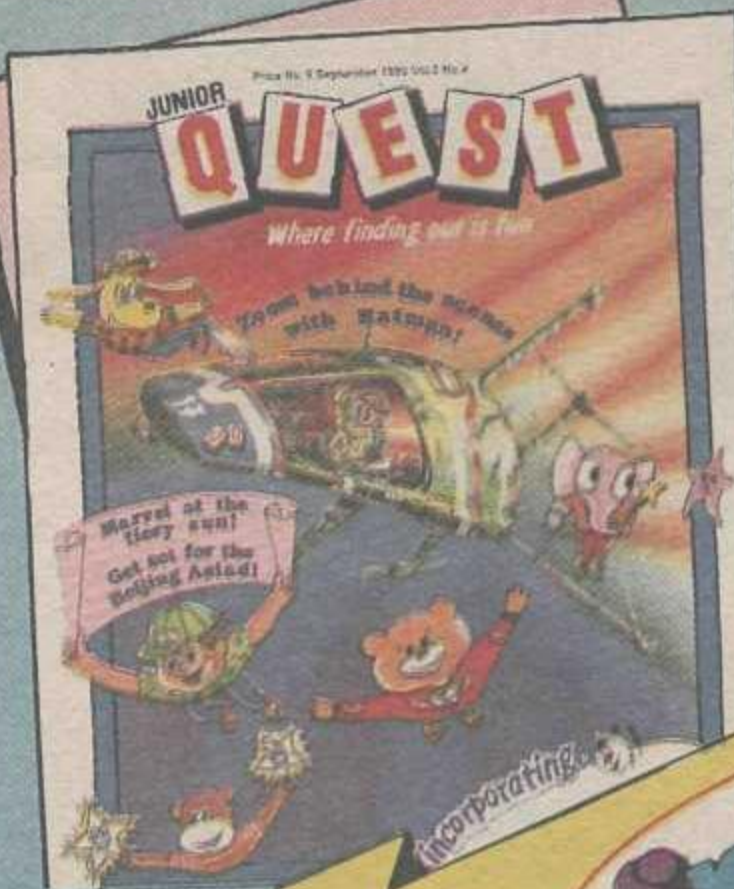
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